Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024

https://archive.org/details/bwb_P9-BIB-018

THE BOOK OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

FOR YOUNGER READERS

An Account of Our Common Heritage from the Dawn of Civilization to the Coming of the Greeks

DOROTHY MILLS, M.A.

Formerly Head of the History Department, Brearley School, New York

ILLUSTRATED

SECOND EDITION

G · P · PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK

CAMROSE LUTHERAN COLLEGE

THE BOOK OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Copyright, 1923
by
Dorothy Mills
Twenty-third Impression

All rights reserved. This book, or parts thereof, must not be reproduced in any form without permission.

D
65
M5
[redacted]/3892

Made in the United States of America

To

THE BREARLEY SCHOOL

PREFACE

THIS book was used in its original form by one of my history classes, and it is published in the hope that what has been interesting to a few readers may prove equally so to a larger number. It tells the story of how man began his great adventure of learning how to live, and it travels with him on this quest from the dawn of civilization to the coming of the Greeks.

For the subject matter I am indebted to the standard works of scholars, and I have also received valuable help of different kinds from various sources. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude for their help to Sir E. A. Wallis Budge of the British Museum, to Mr. D. G. Hogarth of the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, to Professor Henry Fairfield Osborn of the American Museum of Natural History, New York, and to the Very Rev. Howard C. Robbins, Dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York. I am also grateful to Professor Charles Foster Kent of Yale University for permission to use some of his translations, and to Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons for permission to use Professor Breasted's translation of the Hymn to the Sun God.

I should like also to thank all those who in so many ways, directly and indirectly, have helped me

by sympathy and encouragement, by advice and criticism, especially Dr. and Mrs. Charles Mallory Williams, who read the original manuscript, and whose constant interest and kindness have helped so much in the making of this book.

DOROTHY MILLS.

NEW YORK.

CONTENTS

PAGE

INTRODUCTION—PRE-HISTORIC TIMES . . 3

THE EGYPTIANS

CHAPTER

I.—THE LAND OF EGYPT 13

II.—EARLIEST EGYPT 19

III.—EGYPTIAN BUILDINGS

I.—THE TOMBS 24

II.—THE PYRAMIDS 26

III.—THE TEMPLES 29

IV.—EGYPTIAN BOOKS AND WRITING . . 33

V.—LIFE IN TOWN AND COUNTRY

I.—EGYPTIAN DRESS . . . 37

II.—THE EGYPTIAN HOUSE . . 39

III.—A VISIT TO THEBES . . . 42

IV.—EGYPTIAN TRADE WITH OTHER LANDS 46

V.—IN THE COUNTRY . . . 49

VI.—CHILDREN IN ANCIENT EGYPT . . 52

CHAPTER PAGE

VII.—The Pharaoh 56

VIII.—The Egyptian Gods and Heaven

I.—primitive beliefs about the gods 60

II.—egyptian religion . . . 61

III.—the egyptian heaven and the judgment of the dead . 62

IV.—a reformer king . . . 69

THE ASSYRIANS AND THE BABYLONIANS

I.—The Land of Mesopotamia . . . 75

II.—The Story of Assyria . . . 83

III.—Cuneiform Writing 90

IV.—The Story of Babylonia . . . 93

V.—Life in Ancient Babylon . . . 98

VI.—The Gods of Ancient Babylon . . 104

THE HEBREWS

I.—The Land of Palestine . . . 113

II.—The Bible 115

III.—The Patriarchs

I.—the patriarchs in canaan . 118

II.—the story of joseph . . 120

IV.—Moses and the Exodus from Egypt . 122

CHAPTER PAGE

V.—The Making of the Hebrew Nation

I.—Life in the Wilderness . . 125

II.—The Conquest of Canaan . 128

VI.—The United Kingdom of Israel

I.—Saul 131

II.—David 134

III.—Solomon 136

VII.—The Divided Kingdom

I.—The Kingdom of Israel . . 139

II.—The Kingdom of Judah . . 141

VIII.—The Hebrew Prophets . . . 143

IX.—From the Captivity to the Destruction of Jerusalem 151

THE HITTITES

I.—The Land of the Hittites . . 159

II.—The Hittite People and their Cities. 162

III.—The Hittites and their Neighbours . 167

THE PERSIANS

I.—The People of Ancient Persia . . 177

II.—The Story of the Behistun Rock . 182

III.—The Story of Cyrus 185

IV.—The Great Kings of Persia . . 188

THE PHŒNICIANS

CHAPTER PAGE

I.—The Land and People of Phœnicia . 195

II.—Phœnician Cities and Industries . 198

III.—Phœnician Sailors and Traders . 203

IV.—Phœnician Colonies 209

V.—What We Owe to Phœnicia . . 213

Conclusion 213

Chronological Chart 214

Index 215

ILLUSTRATIONS

The illustrations in this edition are grouped at the end of the book, with the exception of two maps facing pages 1 and 192.

Statue of Tutankhamon in the Form of the God Khonsu, now in the Cairo Museum
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Stone-Age Man Making Flint Implements

Pre-Historic Cave-Dwellers .

The Pyramids and the Sphinx

Seated Statue of Khafra, Builder of the Second Pyramid. Period of the Old Kingdom
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Wall Painting from the Tomb of Nakht at Thebes, Showing Vintage and Fowling Scenes
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Egyptian Ship in the Time of Hatshepsut

Model of a Travelling Boat from the Tomb of Mehenkwetre, *ca.* 2000 B.C., in the Metropolitan Museum of Art
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Winged Bull

Interior of Sargon's Palace

Assurbanipal Hunting Lions

"Ziggurat" Restored

Hittite Rock Sculpture, Representing a Hittite God

Sculptures and Inscriptions from the Behistun Rock

Archer-Frieze from the Palace of Darius I at Susa

Phœnician Galley and Bireme

MAPS

	PAGE
The Ancient World	1
The Persian Empire	192

INTRODUCTION

PREHISTORIC TIMES

INTRODUCTION

Pre-historic Times

Many the forms of life,
Wondrous and strange to see,
But nought than man appears
More wondrous and more strange.
Sophocles: *Antigone.*

History is the story of the way in which man has learned, and is still learning, how to live: of how through long centuries he has sought to satisfy the practical needs of his body, the questioning of his mind, and the searching of his spirit. It is the story of the greatest adventure in the world, this story of how man, from very small beginnings, has progressed in body, mind and spirit.

There was once a time when the earth was like a wilderness; there were no cultivated fields, no roads, no towns or villages, no houses. The lowlands were covered with vast and almost impenetrable forests and jungles, with wide rolling prairies, open meadows and barren sandy steppes. Strange animals roamed over the land and lived in the water, such as the hippopotamus and rhinoceros and great mammoth elephants; and wild bison and untamed horses lived on the open spaces on the hillsides.

Such were the surroundings in which man first lived. These early men had no houses, no clothes, though they probably had some kind of hairy covering which they lost later, owing to their custom of wearing the furs and skins of other animals; they had no tools or weapons, no tame animals, no jars or pitchers in which to keep food, no fire by which to warm themselves or to cook; they had even no language. The animals were much better off than man, for they had thick fur in which to keep warm, tusks and horns with which to protect themselves, hoofs under which they could trample their enemies, and wings with which they could fly away from danger. Man had none of these things, but he had two other things which the animals had not: he had a brain and he had hands, and when he had learned how to use these, he began to rise above the animal life which surrounded him. History is the story of how man learned to do and think and have all that we do and think and have today, and we owe almost everything we have to the inventions of people whose names we do not know, who lived many thousands of years ago, for everything that is invented grows out of something that has gone before. If we think back far enough in the history of the world, we come to a time when these everyday things had a beginning, when, for example, the first waggon was made because someone had thought of a wheel, and when the load had no longer to be drawn by man, because someone else had thought of taming a wild horse.

History is said to have begun as soon as man had

learned how to keep records of what had happened; so these earlier periods when no records were made, because no one knew how to write, are called Pre-historic times. The first things pre-historic men needed were weapons and tools, and as they had not yet learned to work metal, they made these of stone, and the long period when stone was the only material used, is called the Stone Age. We do not know how long this age continued, but we do know that it may have begun more than one hundred thousand years ago. In the beginning they no doubt used stones just as they found them, choosing the shape and size that were most convenient; but they presently learned that by knocking and chipping a stone with other stones they could make its cutting edge sharper, and blunt off its jagged places, making it easier to hold. One of the earliest tools thus made was the Hand Axe, and for a long time it, and the small splinters and flakes of stone knocked off when they made it, were used for almost everything. By degrees, however, men improved upon it, until they produced stone hammers, axes, chisels, and scrapers. A very important discovery made early in the Stone Age was the use of fire, for then men could warm themselves and cook their meat, and another great advance was made, though much later, when the bow and arrow was invented, for then men could defend themselves at a distance and kill birds for food as well as animals.

In the middle of the Stone Age there took place a very strange thing, which must have been a terrifying experience for primitive man. The climate began to change, and it gradually grew colder and colder,

and ice began creeping down from the frozen North, burying everything beneath its weight as it slowly and relentlessly advanced. Geologists have discovered that this had happened three times before, and that each descent of the ice had been followed by a long warm period, but we know almost nothing about those very early times. When the ice came down for the fourth time, in the middle of the Stone Age, men were hunters, roaming about with no settled homes. The ice drove them further South and they began to use caves as shelters from cold and storm and wind. Some of these caves have been discovered, the walls of which are decorated with rough drawings, and tools and other implements used long ago have been unearthed in them.

It must have been a strange life that was led by these Stone Age cave-men. Fires were built at the entrance to the caves, and here they would spend the long, dark winter days huddled together. The hearth was the centre of all things to them, and as a fresh fire was very difficult to kindle, they never allowed the old one to go out. To the minds of these primitive men there was something very mysterious about fire, it gave them light and warmth, but if they touched it, they received a sharp stinging hurt. So they gradually looked upon the fire on their hearth as the dwelling-place of a spirit, who was sometimes friendly and sometimes the reverse, and if one of their number died, he was buried near the hearth, where he might be warm and comfortable and under the protection of this guardian spirit. Nature frightened these men, there was so much that they

could not understand, and in their dim striving to find out the truth about it all, they peopled the world with ghosts and spirits, of most of whom they were terribly afraid, and so, like children frightened in the dark, they felt safer, especially in the gloomy winter, when they were together. But when the spring and summer came and the days grew longer and warmer, some of their terrors vanished, and the men went out to hunt, whilst the women gathered berries, roots and nuts, wild apples and other fruit, and the storehouse would be replenished for the coming winter.

The next step in advance taken by primitive men was when they learned to plant, and then they began to live in settled homes. The men still went hunting, but the women planted and found out how to weave, so that they had baskets in which to carry things, and then they discovered that clay would harden in the fire, and so they began to make all kinds of pottery. The first wooden houses were built on piles in the lakes, and as some of these piles have been found in Switzerland, they are known as Swiss Lake Dwellings. They seem to have been quite comfortable shelters, with rough wooden furniture, and to have contained wooden pitchers and spoons as well as a variety of pottery dishes, jars and bowls. As these men learned how to plant more and to make a greater variety of things, they wandered less and made themselves real homes, where they kept their belongings, where the children grew up, and to which the men returned from their hunting expeditions. At first everything was done by man, but later they learned how to tame the "wild things out of the wild woods," and first the

dog, who became the friend of man. He found food and warmth and kindness in the human dwelling-places, and by degrees this all became familiar and friendly to him, and he grew tame, until at last he roamed no more but made his home with man. Then were tamed sheep, goats, swine, oxen and—last of all—the horse.

We know most about pre-historic man in Europe, and at the time of which we are speaking, he had advanced a great deal from the first beginnings. He had learned how to make weapons and tools, to use fire and to cook and make pottery, to make himself a shelter as a home, to plant seeds and to make some kind of rough clothing. Pre-historic man had discovered all these things for the first time; he was the ancestor of the great discoverers, inventors and artists of later times, of all those who have within them a spark of creative genius. But at last he came to a point when he could learn nothing more. His tools and implements were still of stone. He had no metal, so he could not build much or make ships, neither had he learned how to write. Man needed these things before he could advance in civilization: he needed metal for better tools and building and weapons; he needed ships to bring him into communication with other parts of the world; and above all, he needed writing in order to make records of his law and history. To the east of Europe, men had found out how to use metal, to build ships and to write, and very slowly, but very surely, this civilization moved westwards, each century giving something to it, until it became the civilization we

have inherited, and which we in turn must hand on, enriched by the new things we have added to it.

This book will tell the story of the beginnings of this civilization in the countries of the ancient East.

THE
EGYPTIANS

THE EGYPTIANS

CHAPTER I

The Land of Egypt

Egypt is one of the most interesting countries in the world. Its records are among the oldest, and it has had a long and wonderful history. This book is going to tell the story of those far-away days, thousands of years ago, in that interesting country, and we shall be able to learn how people lived then, how their houses were built and how they dressed, how they worked and traded and fought, how they amused themselves, and how they worshipped in their temples. In museums there are still to be seen many articles used by the Egyptians, things they had in their houses, jewelry, ornaments, weapons, and toys with which the children played. There are few other countries in the world able to show us such ancient things as Egypt, and these things are not only interesting because they are old, but because they are the beginnings of many things that we use today: the first paper, the first writing, the first book, the first statue all came from Egypt.

Now in every land, the shape of the country, the surroundings and the climate have had a great deal

to do with the history of the people who lived there, and this is especially true of Egypt. If you look at the map, you will see that Egypt is a long and narrow country along the banks of the river Nile. Someone once described the shape of Egypt as being like that of a lily, the Nile being the long and crooked stem, and the Delta the flower. The Nile is about three thousand miles long, a little longer than the width across the Atlantic Ocean between Europe and America. Its source is in Victoria Nyanza in Central Africa, and it is known then as the White Nile; about thirteen hundred and fifty miles from the sea it is joined by the Blue Nile, and a hundred and forty miles further on by the Atbara; after this junction the river flows on to the sea as a single stream, the Nile itself.

Egypt is very narrow compared to its length, it consists of the valley of the river and nothing more. Between the Nile and the Red Sea are the Arabian Mountains; they are wild and desolate and no Egyptian ever made them his home, but the region was used as a stone quarry, and there the Egyptians went to procure the great stones for their huge buildings. It was a dreary land, where famine and thirst and death reigned. Slaves were sent to work in the quarries, and many never returned. West of the Nile are the Libyan Mountains, just as desolate as the mountains in the east, and beyond these the land slopes down to the Desert of Sahara. The land of Egypt is, therefore, simply the strip of land lying on either bank of the Nile, about seven hundred miles in length, with desolate, lifeless mountains on each

side as soon as the river valley is left behind. The width of the valley varies from ten to thirty miles; sometimes the mountains come so close to the river that there are only a few miles of fertile land on the bank. There is very little rain in Egypt, hardly any at all in Upper Egypt. The sky is a beautiful blue, and the sun is always bright, so Egypt can be pictured as a bright shining river, with green banks, cliffs sloping up to the grey mountains, and brilliant undimmed sunshine over all.

An ancient Greek historian once said that "Egypt was the gift of the Nile." This saying is quite literally true, for it is the Nile that makes the country fertile. Perhaps you have already been wondering how anything could grow in a country where it seldom or never rained? But in the mountains from which the Blue Nile and the Atbara come, there is a rainy season beginning about April. The rain comes down so heavily that the rivers rise and become very much swollen. The snows melt and all these waters rush into the main body of the stream, bringing with them rich deposits of thick black mud. As the river flows on towards the sea, it overflows its banks, covering the soil with the thick, rich mud. This inundation begins in Egypt about the end of June, and the river goes on rising until the middle of September, when it remains stationary for two or three weeks and then rises again, reaching its greatest height in October. Then it begins to sink gradually, until by the following June it reaches its normal level before the rising begins again. To the ancient Egyptians this was a most extraordinary thing, which they

could not explain in any way, and they said that the Nile was "an incomprehensible mystery." In modern times great canals and embankments have been built, so that when the overflowing begins, the water irrigates a large surface of land making it rich and fertile, and the towns and villages are reached by roads over the embankments, the canals being built so that the water is carried to the places that need it most.

The course of the Nile is interrupted six times by Cataracts. These Cataracts are not great waterfalls like Niagara, but they are found in rocky regions where the rocks are so hard that the river is unable to wear down a channel as in the other parts of its bed, and so it winds in and out amongst great rocks that seriously interfere with navigation. In ancient times, when men knew less about engineering, the Nile was navigable only as far as the First Cataract. The part of the country from this First Cataract to Memphis was known as Upper Egypt (the kings of which wore a White Crown), and the part from Memphis to the sea was called Lower Egypt (the kings wearing a Red Crown). These ancient Egyptians called their land "Kam," a word meaning black or dark-coloured, from the colour of the soil.

In the days when the Nile was still digging a bed for itself through the rocky soil, the northern part of the country was entirely under water. The Mediterranean Sea reached nearly as far as where Cairo now stands, making a wide bay. The water, however, was very shallow, and as the river brought down its thick deposits of mud, the bay gradually filled up.

until it became a swampy, but very fertile soil. In places the water remained deep, and this resulted in the Nile branching into several arms and entering the sea by a number of mouths. At one time there were seven, but in modern times the water has been drained off and now there are only two. This formation is known as the Delta. The name was given to it by the Greeks, who saw in it the shape of their capital letter D, which is made in the form of a triangle and is called Delta. (Since then all river mouths which branch out in this way have been known by the same name.)

The climate of Egypt is almost the most perfect in the world. The desert air is pure and dry, so that the heat is rarely oppressive, and there is no humidity. The nights are always cool, even in the heat of summer, and in winter they are surprisingly cold.

The shape of the land and its climate have influenced the history of Egypt. Because of the length and narrowness of the country, communication between the various towns and villages scattered along the banks of the Nile was difficult. So instead of having one government, they developed independent governments of their own, and there were a number of small city states instead of one strong one. But, on the other hand, as soon as the people began to learn how to irrigate, they found that it was necessary to join together in some form of government, and to organize an ordered way of living together. We shall soon see that the Egyptian buildings were very huge; the people were probably influenced by the flat stretches of land along the river banks, and

wanted to build something in contrast to them. The surrounding mountains also influenced the ideas of the earliest Egyptians about the rest of the world; we shall see what these ideas were in another chapter.

CHAPTER II

Earliest Egypt

It is not known with any certainty where the ancient Egyptians came from, but it is believed that long ago, before history began, they came from Asia and made homes for themselves along the banks of the Nile. They probably brought their domestic animals with them: the ox and cow, the sheep, the goat and the dog. The domestic animals that were native to Egypt were the ass and the cat; the wild animals were the crocodile, the hippopotamus and the snake.

The very earliest Egyptians soon forgot about the land from which they came, and as any kind of communication with the world beyond the mountains was almost impossible in those days, the Egyptians grew to believe that their land of Egypt was in the centre of the world; it was a sacred place to them, and all who lived there were thought of as noble and fine. Most sacred of all was the Nile, for though they did not understand what caused the yearly overflowing of the river and inundation of the fields, they knew that it was the Nile that made their land fertile, so that their crops grew in such rich abundance. They believed that the earth was flat, and of a long oval

shape, with the Nile flowing from end to end; they thought that high mountains surrounded the whole land, and that beyond the mountains all round the world flowed the Heavenly River. No one had ever seen this wonderful river, but the Egyptians were quite certain it existed, and that a beautiful Heavenly Boat in which the Sun-God sat, sailed round the world on the river once every twenty-four hours. These very early Egyptians believed that the setting of the sun only meant that the Heavenly Boat was hidden for a time behind one of the highest mountains.

The Egyptians were always longing to know where the Nile began. The Cataracts made it impossible for them to sail very far up, and its source was a matter of great mystery to them. They concluded finally that it must be a part of the Heavenly River, and that it entered the land of Egypt through a cleft in the mountains somewhere in the far-away South. There, in an underground cavern, they pictured to themselves the Nile-God, kneeling on the rocky floor, with a sacred vessel in each hand, out of which streamed the life-giving waters of the Nile.

For long centuries explorers were continually trying to find the source, but the difficulties in the way of navigation were so great, that it was not until comparatively recent times that it was discovered. It was in 1862 that the English explorer J. H. Speke reached the place in Central Africa where the White Nile flows out from Victoria Nyanza.

We know very little about these ancient Egyptians. The first records of them tell us something of what

they were like; they were dark-haired and slender; the men wore a skin thrown over the shoulder with sometimes a short white linen kilt, and the women wore long, straight garments reaching down to their feet. They lived in mud houses, and they knew how to make the finest pottery of that age. They were probably farmers, hunters and fishermen. But the most interesting thing that we know about this period is that in the year 4241 B.C. a calendar was introduced. This is the first fixed date in the history of the world of which we are certain. Before this time the Egyptians had reckoned by the moon (the word moon means "the measurer of time"), but the length of each moon varied from twenty-nine to thirty days. When they made this new calendar, they made twelve months of thirty days each, but as they found out that this way of counting was not accurate at the end of the year, instead of giving some months thirty-one days and having a leap-year once every four years as we do, they celebrated the extra days as feasts and holidays at the end of every year. Then they wanted some way of counting the years; for about seven hundred years they gave a special name to each, taking the name from some particular event that had happened in that year, but this did not prove convenient, so later they numbered the years of each king's reign, and spoke of the first or second or third year of the reign of a certain king. Naming a year after an important event may not have been a very convenient method for the ancient Egyptians, but it has given us a very valuable historical record of the chronology of those early days.

The men of this far-away time worked very hard to make their country prosperous; they deepened the bed of the Nile, and built canals and ditches so that as much as possible of the land might be irrigated and made fertile; they turned the marshy swamps of the Delta into good land for crops and pasture, and they also learned a number of arts and crafts. They did not live in large towns, but in small communities all along the river bank, each of which had its own laws and customs, its temple and priests and warriors. They were quite independent of each other, though they were all looked upon as belonging to either Upper or Lower Egypt. In each little settlement it was the priests who had the most leisure to make plans for good government, and so they took the lead in everything. Unfortunately these little towns were frequently jealous of each other, and were often at war.

As soon as these early Egyptians began to learn that there were other countries in the world besides their own, they found out that Egypt was in a very good position in the middle of what was then known of the world. They were rich, for gold and ivory could be had in the upper parts of the Nile, the Red Sea gave them coral, and the mines of Sinai were rich in turquoise and copper. All that was needed was a man who realized the value of these natural resources, who had imagination to see what a great country Egypt might become, and who would himself be capable of seizing an opportunity when it arose. At last there was such a strong man, and he made himself overlord of all Egypt, becoming King of the

whole country, uniting the White and the Red Crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt. According to tradition this king was Menes, and he probably lived about 3400 B.C. He built the city of Memphis, the oldest city in the world, and this was the capital of Egypt for about fifteen hundred years. Menes, with his young daughter, whose name Bener-ab meant "Sweetheart" beside him, was buried at Abydos, which became the city of tombs, and as the Egyptians placed in their tombs all kinds of things they thought the dead person might want in the next world, such as, toilet articles, ointment, food, drink, weapons and many other things, we have been able to find out the kinds of things they used. But even with these we do not know very much about those remote times. We do know, however, that the kings claimed to be descended from the gods, so they were treated with great reverence; they seem to have been mighty hunters, and to have lived for those times in some magnificence, for finely wrought furniture, beautiful bowls, ornaments and carvings of this time have been found.

It was from these beginnings that the Egyptians went on to develop the powerful and civilized state that Egypt became.

CHAPTER III

Egyptian Buildings

I. THE TOMBS

The ancient Egyptians wrote no books of history such as we write today; but they left the records of their life inscribed upon the walls of their principal buildings, more especially upon the tombs. The Egyptians believed that the soul of a man, the spirit that did not die when the body died, called by the Egyptians the "Ka," would return and visit his body after his death, and that if he wished to live for ever with the gods in heaven, his body must be preserved. But it would have been vain to preserve the bodies of the dead, unless secure hiding-places could be provided for them. The tombs had to be guarded against the attacks of thieves and of wild animals, and to be placed beyond the reach of the overflowing waters of the Nile. In very ancient times the graves were dug deep in the sandy or rocky soil at the edge of the desert, but soon the beliefs of the Egyptians about the life of the soul after death, made them build more permanent tombs. They called their dwelling-places "inns," because they expected to remain in them but a short time, but their tombs they called

"eternal dwelling-places," because in these they would live for ever.

These Egyptian tombs were built of stone and consisted of several chambers above ground, and a deep underground pit which led to a vault where the coffin was placed. It is from these chambers that we have learned so much about the daily life of the Egyptians, for the walls were covered with paintings showing what had been the daily life of the person buried beneath. There are pictures of men hunting, fishing and doing every kind of farm work; craftsmen in the towns can be seen weaving, making pottery, glass or beads; scribes are writing, slaves are working, and every other kind of occupation is shown. In one chamber were placed images or statues of the dead person, and sometimes this chamber was walled up so that no one could enter, and only a narrow slit in the wall was left, through which the statue could be seen. One chamber was called the "Offering Chamber," in which there was always a false door, and in front of this door was the table on which the offerings of cakes, fruit, bread, vegetables, flowers and other things were placed. These were for the spirit when he visited the tomb.

The Egyptians also believed that things the dead person had used on earth would be useful to his spirit in the next world, and so they placed in the tomb all kinds of articles used by people in their daily life: the bow and arrows of the hunter; the spear and dagger of the warrior; the palette and colours of the artist; dices and counters used in games; children's dolls and toys; combs, mirrors, hairpins and fans

belonging to ladies; jars, vases, bottles of all kinds; chairs, tables, couches, stools, boxes, ornaments and jewelry, such as beads, necklaces, rings and bracelets. Quantities of these things have been found and can now be seen in the great museums of the world. The pictures on the walls are still there; and thus it is that the tombs form a very important part of the history book of Egypt.

II. THE PYRAMIDS

All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his house.—ISAIAH, XIV, 8.

Not far from Cairo, on the edge of the desert, stand the Pyramids, the oldest monuments constructed by human hands in the world. They were already ancient to the men of periods that we call ancient, and there they stand, silent and awe-inspiring, as they have stood for more than four thousand years.

The pyramids were the tombs of the kings. When a new king ascended the throne, he at once began to build his pyramid. He chose the site and had the ground levelled, and then he sent one of the principal nobles of his court on a special mission to the quarries, and the greater the speed with which he procured the necessary blocks of stone, the greater was the favour shown him on his return by the King. But the largest of the pyramids took a very long time to build, for the stone had to be brought from the quarries over the desert, and before this could be done a roadway had

to be built. The roadway for the Great Pyramid of King Khufu took ten years to build, and a hundred thousand men at a time worked at it; every three months they were changed, and altogether four million men were employed just to build the roadway. On the Pyramid itself, which took twenty years to build, seven million men were employed. Every year the King lived, more layers were added to his Pyramid. A chamber was built at the very beginning for the coffin of the King, and as the pyramid grew larger, more chambers were added, and these were probably used for members of the royal family. A pyramid did not have an offering chamber as did the ordinary tomb, but attached to each pyramid was a temple, which took the place of the different chambers in other tombs.

The Great Pyramid is a solid mass of stone blocks, each fitted exactly to the one next it. Two million three hundred thousand blocks of limestone were used, each of which weighed about as much as an ordinary waggon-load of coal, and it has been calculated that a wall might be built round France with the stones used. The sides of the Great Pyramid are 755 feet long, and the Pyramid itself is a little less than 500 feet high, that is to say, it is about thirty feet higher than St. Peter's, Rome, about a hundred and twenty feet higher than St. Paul's Cathedral in London, about two hundred feet higher than the Capitol in Washington. All the pyramids are not as high as this one, and some of them were never finished, as some kings did not live long enough to make their tombs as huge and imposing as they

would have liked, and others were not rich enough, for it was very costly to build a pyramid. The Egyptians had no cranes or machinery for lifting the enormous stones used in their buildings, and for a long time the mechanical means they used were not satisfactorily explained. It is thought now, however, that they constructed great slanting ascents of sand and rock, up which they pushed the blocks of stone. These ascents would grow higher and higher as the building progressed, and when it was completed, they would be levelled to the ground.

Khufu called his Pyramid "Khut," a word which means "Glory," and from what we know of the way in which these immense royal tombs were built, we can guess something of the character of the kings who ordered their erection. Only men of overweening pride and ambition, of selfish indifference to the sufferings of the slaves who toiled at their tasks for long years, could have insisted on the building of monuments which, as far as we can see, were for no other purpose than the glory and renown of the king himself. But if the pyramids speak to us of the ruthless ambition and splendour of the kings, they also speak to us of the greatness of the architects who designed them. The fame of kings and conquerors, who have added to the greatness and wealth of their land, has sometimes been allowed to overshadow that of the thinker, whose work endures long after the wealth and might of the conqueror have passed away. The empire of the ancient Pharaohs has long since disappeared, but the work of their architects has lasted, and the art and science first conceived by them

have left imperishable marks upon the world. There is in Egypt a pyramid, several centuries older than the Great Pyramid of Khufu. The man who planned it, a man possessed of skill and imagination equal to that of any modern engineer, was Imhotep, the first great architect in history.

Near the Great Pyramid is the Sphinx, that strangely mysterious statue, with a lion's body and a human head, that has kept silent watch by the pyramids for centuries. The ancient Greek travellers who visited Egypt, described it as a strange being who was always asking questions that none could answer, and propounding riddles which had no solution. The head is probably that of a king, but no one knows with certainty whom it was meant to represent. Traditions and legends have grown up round it, and to the modern world it has become the symbol of unexplained mystery: problems that our skill cannot solve, questions that our ingenuity cannot answer, mysteries that baffle us, we call riddles of the Sphinx.

III. THE TEMPLES

In all countries some of the greatest buildings have been cathedrals and churches, and this was true of Egypt, for the Egyptians were a very religious people and they built great temples in which to worship their gods. These temples were built with the same idea as the tombs, that they were to last forever, and though the desert sands in drifting over them for centuries, have spoiled much of the ancient magni-

ficence, their great decorated columns and statues are still there, and we can form a very good idea of their size and appearance in the days when their courts and holy places were thronged with worshippers.

Egyptian temples were not all the same size, but they were generally built on the same plan. A temple was approached by an avenue of sphinxes. These sphinxes in the avenues to the temples had the bodies of lions, but they generally had the heads of some other animal, instead of that of a man like the Great Sphinx. These led up to the gate, which was made of cedar wood and overlaid with beaten bronze or silver. On each side of the gate were two high towers, and this entrance was called a Pylon. In front of the entrance stood an obelisk, and both it and the towers were covered with Egyptian writing and pictures describing the deeds of the Pharaoh who had built the temple, and generally there were great statues of him sitting beside the obelisk. These statues were so enormous that it is difficult to understand how any beings were strong enough to have brought the great stones from the quarries, to have carved them, and then set them up in their places.

The gate opened into a court, which had a colonnade running round it, and in the centre was another obelisk covered with carvings telling of the generosity of the Pharaoh who had built the temple, and this obelisk was often studded with precious stones. Another gateway opposite the first led into a hall of columns, out of which opened the holiest place of all in the temple. This was a smaller and lower chamber,

and the only light that ever entered it was that from the lamp carried by the priest, who was the only person allowed inside. The doors of cedar, covered with gold, were always locked, and inside was the shrine and statue of the god to whom the temple was dedicated. The statue was made of wood, and the duties of the priest were to paint his face afresh, and to give him new garments (the old ones were carefully put away, and were used to wrap round the mummies of those who had given great and rich gifts to the temple). The priest had also to set food, wine, water and flowers before the god, and on very great festivals, the statue was placed in a beautiful boat and carried on the shoulders of the priests in a gorgeous procession round the city.

The space behind the temple was occupied by great storehouses, full of grain and fruits and wine, and the houses of the priests. A god was one of the greatest of Egyptian landowners. Besides the temple, he had farms and fields, he owned boats which traded up and down the Nile, and he even had his own army. All this brought great wealth to the god and to the temple where he was worshipped, and it needed very large numbers of priests to attend to all the business connected with so rich and important a personage. This made the priests very powerful in Egypt, and even the Pharaoh himself stood in awe of them.

The greatest Egyptian temple was at Thebes, known today as Karnak, because the ancient city of Thebes has disappeared and the village near the temple is called Karnak. Like many of the great cathedrals in Europe, this temple was not all built

at once or by one person. Twenty-one different kings helped to build it during a period of about eighteen hundred years. It contained several courts and halls and chambers, which were entered by no less than six Pylons, and its great hall was the largest in any temple. Twelve enormous pillars formed the nave, and smaller ones made aisles and held up the roof on each side. The great pillars in the middle were so large that it would require six men with outstretched arms to span them, and a hundred men could stand with safety on the capital of each. All the pillars and walls glowed with colour, red and blue and green, and they were covered with pictures and writing describing the god worshipped there. At Karnak this was the god Amon. He was the Sun-God, and in earliest times he was the god who belonged specially to Thebes (every town had its own particular god), but he grew more and more important in the belief of the Egyptians, until he became recognized as their chief god, and all Egyptians paid him honour in his great temple at Thebes.

CHAPTER IV

Egyptian Books and Writing

The art which has had more influence in the world than almost any other, is that of writing and of making books. The Egyptians were the first people who made paper, and they were also the first who thought of making a book, but their books were different from ours. When the Egyptian wanted to make paper, he took the stem of the papyrus plant (a reed-like plant that grew in the Nile), cut it into thin slices lengthwise, laid the strips on a board in a row and placed similar strips crosswise on them. The surfaces were then joined by a kind of glue, pressed and dried, and the paper was made. The pieces of paper were of different widths, six, eleven, twelve and fourteen inches wide, and they varied in length from a few inches to as much as a hundred and thirty feet. If the Egyptian wanted many pages for his book, he did not cut the pages into sheets and bind them together as we do, but he took the long strips and fastened them together at the ends and rolled them up; the longer his book, the bigger grew the roll.

Not every one knew how to write, but there were scribes whose business it was to do writing for all sorts of people. Today very busy people sometimes

have secretaries to write for them, because they have more to do than they can do themselves; in ancient Egypt they had scribes to write for them, because they often did not know how to write themselves. The scribe wrote with a pen cut out of a reed, and he kept his pens and ink or paint on a palette. This was a piece of wood from five or six to twenty inches long, with oblong places cut out for the reeds, and shallow holes for the ink. Most of the ordinary writing was done in black, but sometimes red and other colours were employed. Some scribes tried to be very realistic and used red for the sun, yellow for the moon, green for trees and plants, but this method was not always very successful, as there was only a limited number of colours, and so sometimes the objects were not very true to nature.

Egyptian writing is called "hieroglyphics," from two Greek words which mean "sacred" and "to engrave." So "hieroglyphics" really mean "sacred engraved signs." This name was given by the Greeks who could not read the writing and who thought that only the priests could write, and that as so much of the writing was on tombs and temples, it must be all about religious subjects. But Egyptian books covered a great many subjects: we have poetry, tales of adventure and magic, mathematics and medicine, as well as religious teaching and hymns.

Egyptian writing is a picture writing, that is to say, that instead of having an alphabet of letters which spell words, little pictures were drawn of everything that was written about, and these pictures were generally arranged in columns. In the earliest days,

pictures were enough, but as time went on, the Egyptians wanted to write about many things which were difficult to represent by means of pictures, so then they began to use certain signs for different words, or for the different syllables of one word, but all these signs were still pictures of birds and animals and leaves and other objects, so that Egyptian hieroglyphics look like long columns of quaint drawings which are very pretty.

As long as the Egyptians had not very much to write about, or only wanted to decorate their temples and tombs and obelisks, this picture writing did very well, for though it took a long time to do, it was very ornamental, but when it came to writing books or keeping business records, these hieroglyphics were a slow and complicated way of writing. So by degrees the pictures and signs were changed, little bits of the picture being cut off here and there in order to write more quickly, until at last the writing had completely changed from the old hieroglyphic form. This new kind of writing was called "hieratic," and was used chiefly for writing on papyrus, the hieroglyphic form being still used for engraving on stone. After a time even this changed, and nothing seemed left of the original picture form but some lines and dots and dashes. This kind of writing was called "demotic," which means "popular," and the Egyptians used it until they gave up writing by means of signs and pictures and began to use an alphabet.

For a long time no one could read the Egyptian writing; learned men tried to find a key, but they never succeeded. But a little over a hundred years

ago, some engineers were fortifying Rosetta, a place near the mouth of the Nile, and as they were digging deep into the soil, they found a slab of stone engraved with writing. This was the Rosetta Stone. It is covered with three kinds of writing, hieroglyphics at the top, and Greek at the bottom. In the Greek text there were found to be two proper names, King Ptolemaios and Queen Cleopatra. In the hieroglyphics there were groups of signs enclosed in a kind of shield (called a "cartouche"), an arrangement which had often been found in the inscriptions on the monuments. It was suggested that these were perhaps proper names. This gave a clue to the writing; if the single signs in the enclosed groups answered to the Greek letters in the names, then the key to most of the Egyptian writing would be found. Scholars worked at it, and though not immediately successful, after many attempts and much study and comparing of other signs and names and inscriptions, it was found possible to read the Egyptian writing. The scholar whose name will always be associated with the decipherment of the Egyptian hieroglyphics was a Frenchman, Champollion.

The Rosetta Stone is now in the British Museum. A large part of the top and a piece of the side is broken away, but when what was left was deciphered, it was found to be a decree drawn up by the priests of Memphis in honour of their King Ptolemaios, praising him and giving an account of his benefactions and saying that as a reward "the gods have given him health, victory, might and all other good things, the crown to remain with him and his children for ever."

CHAPTER V

Life in Town and Country

I. EGYPTIAN DRESS

The Egyptians generally used linen for their clothing, and in the earliest times this was thick and coarse, but later a very fine kind was woven that was so light as to be almost transparent and like silk. For many centuries Egypt was a great and powerful country, and so the fashions of dress changed just as they have done at all times, but the Egyptians were a very conservative people and when a fashion changed, the older one continued to be worn at the same time as the new one.

Egyptian dress began by being very simple, but as the centuries went by, it grew more elaborate. In the earliest times the men wore a short white kilt, such as can be seen on the façades of many tombs. Such portraits show the full dress of an Egyptian nobleman: a white kilt, sandals, a wig of long straight hair and a short false beard, a long staff in the hand, and round the neck a flat bead collar. The women wore long straight garments that reached from the breast to the ankles; they were generally held up by straps over the shoulders and tied at the waist with

a girdle. It is said that the ancient Egyptian women were very good-looking; they liked to adorn themselves and wore bead collars and necklaces, bracelets and anklets. The women either wore wigs, or arranged their own hair so that it hung loose to the shoulder with a side-lock hanging down on each side of the face, and a coloured ribbon or a wreath of flowers was often tied round the head across the brow. Sometimes the women braided their hair in a number of braids, and in order to make it appear that they had more hair than was really the case, they braided locks of goats' hair with their own.

As time went on, these simple garments became more elaborate. Both men and women began to wear fuller skirts and robes, and the last fashion seems to have been to wear draperies. The men still kept to the kilt, but it was fuller, and when they wanted to dress in a more elaborate costume, they added such things as sashes, and magnificent bead collars, so wide that they covered the shoulders, and armlets and bracelets. The women at this time kept their narrow, close-fitting dress, but over this they wore a long loose mantle of fine pleated linen.

Fashion in colour rarely changed in Egypt, and the garments were nearly always white, though sometimes other colours were used, green being a favourite, and beautiful designs in colours were used as embroideries.

In the earliest days the Egyptians wore nothing on their feet, but later they wore sandals. These were made of papyrus, palm-fibre or leather, but they had always to be taken off in the presence of the

King. Kings, Queens and members of the royal family wore various kinds of head-dresses. On state occasions soldiers wore gold collars, which were given them as a reward of bravery.

The heat of the Egyptian sun and the hot winds from the south made it necessary for the Egyptians to take great care of their skin. They rubbed oil all over their bodies, and they smeared ointment on their eyelids; this was done once a day, and many women painted their eyebrows and added a thick line under each eye. A black paint called kohl was used for this, and the kohl pot and the ointment vase were very important articles on the dressing-table of an Egyptian lady. They used copper mirrors, which were polished until they shone as glass. The women also rouged their cheeks and lips, and they all stained their finger nails a reddish yellow with the juice of a plant called henna.

Children generally went bare, and so did the peasants when they were at work.

II. THE EGYPTIAN HOUSE

Egyptian houses were lightly built. Tombs and pyramids and temples were constructed to last forever, but the houses were looked upon as only the temporary dwelling places of those who lived in them, and were always so built that they could easily be changed should later dwellers in them wish it. The houses were built of sun-dried brick and wood and were bright and cheerful. Most of the larger houses had gardens, and both houses and garden were sur-

rounded by a high wall. Inside the gate was a courtyard round which were quarters for the slaves, shelters for the chariots and horses, and storerooms; a doorway at the further end led into the garden, which was always planted with trees and shrubs, fruit and flowers, and where there were pools of water and shady arbours, where people could sit protected from the hot sun. There is an old Egyptian story written on papyrus about 1300 B.C. called *The Tale of the Garden of Flowers*, which tells us some of the things, both familiar and unfamiliar, which grew in an Egyptian garden:

She led me, hand in hand, and we went into her garden
to converse together.
There she made me taste of excellent honey.
The rushes of the garden were verdant, and all its bushes
flourishing.
There were currant trees and cherries redder than the
ruby.
The ripe peaches of the garden resembled bronze,
And the groves had the lustre of the stone "nachem."
The "menni" unshelled like cocoanuts they brought to
us,
Its shade was fresh and airy, and soft for the repose of
love.

Egyptians of all classes were fond of flowers and they gave great care to the cultivation of their gardens, so that flowers bloomed in great profusion all the year round.

The King's palace was built on the same plan as other houses, except that it was much larger and

contained many halls and courts where the King held great state ceremonies, gave audiences and administered justice. He had a great many rooms for his own private use, and there were separate apartments for the Queen and the women.

The peasant lived in a small mud hut that was thatched. The floors were bare or covered with rushes or mats. The huts were poorly furnished and crowded together. In the cities or near the great temples that were being built, there were barracks for the workmen, which were an immense succession of mud huts, often opening one into the other. The life of the peasants on the large estates in the country was more wholesome, and they did not live in such a crowded fashion.

The rooms of an Egyptian house were beautifully decorated with paintings on the walls, ceilings and floor. The ceilings were painted to look like an indoor sky; stars shone out from a blue background, and the capitals of the pillars which supported the roof looked like trees, with the carved foliage on the capital and gaily painted birds flitting about beneath. In the same way the floor was painted to represent the green of the marshes, and the water of the pools, with fish and water fowl hidden in the reeds.

The ancient Egyptians did not fill their houses with furniture as we do. They had beautifully carved and inlaid chairs, low couches, a few tables and stands, and not much else. Clothing, jewelry and valuables were generally kept in chests and boxes instead of in cupboards and closets. There were always a number of vases about, and these were

often beautifully decorated. The Egyptian loved his home, and everything about it reflected his bright and cheerful character.

III. A VISIT TO THEBES

It was a sunny day, nearly three thousand years ago, and a Phœnician galley was making its way up the river Nile. It was a boat that had often made the voyage before, for the owner was a merchant, and for a long time he had been bringing the products of his country to Egypt, to sell them in exchange for the articles made in Thebes, the most flourishing city of the Egyptians. He had on board now cedar-wood, cut from the forests in Lebanon, used by the Egyptians for the great doors of their temples, some copper and tin from Syria, and beautiful stuffs dyed with rich purple dye known only to the men of Tyre, and he hoped to do a good trade with these things and to take home in exchange grain and linen of which there was none better in the world than that of Egypt. On this voyage he had brought with him his young son, who had never been in Egypt before, and as the boat sailed up the Nile, the boy looked eagerly at the country on the banks, so different from his own home.

The young Hiram had been much interested in the Delta, for his father had told him of the skill with which the Egyptians had drained this swampy region and made it into fertile land, so that they were able to sell the grain and the flax which grew there so abundantly. But they had not been very long in reaching the end of the Delta, and soon a city was

seen in the distance. Young Hiram thought this must be Thebes, but he was told that before getting to the end of their journey they would pass Memphis, the oldest city in the world. Hiram begged his father to let the boat stop so that he might go ashore and explore, for in the distance he saw mysterious looking obelisks pointing up to the sky, and great temples, and most wonderful of all, the pyramids, those ancient monuments of which his father had often told him. He would have liked to go and see these things nearer, but his father told him it would take them several days still to reach Thebes, and he must wait for another time to see Memphis.

So on they sailed, until at last the buildings of a great city came in sight, and Hiram was told that they were reaching Thebes. But to his surprise he noticed that on one side of the river most of the houses seemed like temples, and there was a stillness over them, whereas from the other side came the hum of a busy city thronged with people. His father explained to him that on one side was the city of the dead, and that most of the buildings he saw there were the tombs where the Egyptians had been buried for centuries. Amongst the tombs were temples, the walls of which were covered with brightly coloured paintings and sculpture, and the sunshine resting on them seemed to fill the air with rich and splendid colour.

But the Phœnicians had business on the other side of the river, and Hiram accompanied his father into the city of the living, where they were going to buy things to take back in exchange for their shipload of

precious woods, stuffs and metals. The streets were narrow, and Hiram wondered how people could like to live in such gloomy-looking houses, but later on, when his father took him into one of the large houses where a friend of his lived, he saw that the dull side of the houses faced the street, and that once inside the heavy gateway, the courtyard was gay and pleasant, with cheerful rooms opening on to it, and he liked the comfortable Egyptian houses where it was easy to keep cool in the heat of the day. But before they made this visit they went into that part of the city where buying and selling were going on. At first Hiram was quite deafened by the noise, for everyone seemed to be shouting at his neighbour and it was sometimes quite difficult to hear what was being said. For there were no fixed prices in this Egyptian market, and Egyptians liked the excitement of bargaining, so they argued as to how many onions a man ought to have in exchange for a bed, or how many ostrich feathers a beautifully carved chair was worth. A few of the merchants had gold and silver rings which they used as money, but the bargaining about the price went on just the same, no matter what was given in exchange. When gold or silver rings were used, however, they were not counted, but weighed. Hiram had some of these rings, and whilst his father was doing his business, he told Hiram to wander about and buy what he wanted to take home with him as gifts for his family and friends.

The shops were square rooms, open in front, where the goods to be sold were displayed. The owner sat

in a convenient spot near them, where he could keep an eye on his belongings and at the same time attract the passer-by, with whom he would bargain as long as the customer had patience. Hiram found a potter at work, and he at once bought a beautifully shaped vase to take to his mother, and nearby he found some rush mats which the basket weaver told him were made from plants growing in the Nile, and he bargained for one of these. His father had sent two slaves with him, so that he was able to carry away his purchases. He wandered round the market and found it difficult to choose what to buy, for the jeweler had most beautiful rings and bracelets and necklaces; lovely glass of every hue was in the glass-maker's shop, but he did not buy any of it, for the Phœnicians were even more celebrated than the Egyptians for their glass, and in one place he found them selling some that had been made in Sidon, but he could not resist bargaining for some lovely turquoise beads for his sister. He was much interested, too, in the writing materials and paper, and in the fine leather harness for the horses. He would most certainly have liked to get some of the furniture, a chair or a stool inlaid with ivory, but he could not buy everything, and he contented himself at the furniture maker's with a little inlaid box that he added to his gifts for his mother. He did not buy any linen, though he looked for a long time at the marvellously fine pieces that were almost like silk, for he knew that his father would bring back large bales of that to sell in Tyre, so he passed on to where the coppersmith was selling finely wrought tools and

weapons, and he bought a dagger for his older brother. From there he went to the wood-carver, where he found some wonderful toys for his younger brothers and sisters. He bought a doll and some toy animals and would have bought some other things, but he found that he had no more rings left to give in exchange, and as the sun was now very hot, he found his way back to the quay where the galley was moored. His father had arrived just before him, and Hiram showed him all his purchases. He decided to do no more sightseeing that day, for he was quite tired, but his father promised him that if he went to bed early and rose in the morning with the sun, he would take him to see the great temple, the greatest of its kind in the world. So Hiram went to bed that night dreaming of all the craftsmen he had seen at work in Thebes and of their beautiful wares, and that he had made such wonderful bargains with them, that he was going home laden with rich specimens of all that these skilful Egyptians had made, to be the envy of all his friends in Tyre.

IV. EGYPTIAN TRADE WITH OTHER LANDS[1]

The earliest Egyptians, as we have seen, knew nothing of any lands but their own. By degrees, however, their horizon widened and they began to have intercourse with lands far from Egypt. They built ships, and these vessels traded in the Mediterranean and in the Red Sea. Their most famous

[1] All the translations in this section are from Breasted: Ancient Records of the Past.

trading expedition was that to the land of Punt, which took place during the reign of Queen Hatshepsut, who lived about three thousand years ago, at a time when Egypt had become a powerful empire. Hatshepsut was a very remarkable woman. The king, her father, allowed her to take part in the government of the country before his death, a very unusual privilege for a woman, but she was clever and capable and quite equal to the task. She had a magnificent coronation, when all Thebes kept holiday, and the great event was recorded in sculpture. One of the inscriptions describes her in very flattering terms: "To look upon her was more beautiful than anything; her form was like a god, she did everything as a god, her splendour was like a god; her majesty was a maiden, beautiful, blooming."

After the death of her father and half-brother who succeeded him, Hatshepsut reigned for sixteen years alone. Her reign was peaceful and prosperous and one of the chief events of it was the expedition sent to the land of Punt to trade there with the natives. Before her death Hatshepsut built a very beautiful temple, and the walls were adorned with sculpture telling the whole story of this expedition, which she declared to have been commanded by the god Amon. Punt was probably the land known today as Somaliland.

Five vessels started out "sailing in the sea, beginning the goodly way towards God's Land, journeying in peace to the land of Punt, according to the command of the Lord of Gods." The voyage was accomplished safely and the Egyptians landed.

carrying the things they had brought to use as articles of exchange. The sight of the foreign ships had brought out the natives of Punt, and headed by their chief, they came down to the shore. "Why," they said, "have ye come hither unto this land, which the people know not? Did ye come down upon the ways of heaven, or did ye sail upon the waters, upon the sea of God's Land?" Friendly relations were soon established, and the natives of Punt brought the rarest products of their land, which they exchanged for the articles the Egyptians had brought. The latter had decidedly the best of the bargain, for they gave such things as necklaces, hatchets, daggers and the like in exchange for myrrh trees and incense; ivory, ebony and gold; sweet-scented woods; apes and skins of animals. The natives helped to load the Egyptian ships, which then returned in safety to Egypt.

Some of the chiefs of Punt accompanied them and the return of the expedition caused great excitement in Thebes. Rumours of the extraordinary riches brought back from Punt spread all over the city, and two holidays were celebrated in honour of the event: one on the day when the chiefs of Punt and the rich produce from their land were presented to the Queen, and the other on the day when she made a thank-offering in the temple. "The marvels of Punt" were talked of everywhere. The inscription over the sculpture showing the Queen in the temple, makes the god say to her:

I have given to thee all lands and all countries, wherein thy heart is glad. I have given to thee all Punt as far as

the lands of God's Land. . . . I have led thy army on water and on land to explore the waters of inaccessible channels, and I have reached the myrrh-terraces. It is a glorious region of God's Land; it is indeed my place of delight.

V. IN THE COUNTRY

Away from the cities, along the banks of the Nile and surrounded by gardens and fields, were the country houses of the Egyptians. These were built on the same plan as the city houses, but the gardens were larger, and most of the great landowners had farms where nearly everything they needed for food, both in the country and in the city, was produced. Their food was varied. We find that even the dead desired in the world to come "ten different kinds of meat, five kinds of poultry, sixteen kinds of bread and cake, six kinds of wine, eleven kinds of fruit, besides all sorts of sweets and many other things."[1]

The poorer people ate coarse bread, onions and other vegetables, and salt. The principal vegetables were: onions, beans, peas, lentils, cucumbers, radishes, water-melons, leeks and garlic.

The richer people ate meat: the flesh of the goat, cow and ox; geese, pigeons and doves. Milk and cheese were used a great deal, and fruit, such as, figs, dates, mulberries and grapes. Beer and different kinds of wine were largely drunk.

All these things came from the estates and farms of the well-to-do Egyptians, and a good part of the time of such a landowner when he was in the country

[1] Translated by J. H. Breasted.

was spent in superintending the work of his estate. The work was done by slaves, with overseers to see that they wasted no time, and when the Egyptian noble came to the country, the overseers would report to him on the condition of his estate. The cattle and other livestock were passed in review before him, and he would be given information as to the work in his fields and orchards.

When this business had been attended to, the Egyptian would go off fishing, hunting or sailing along the Nile. The river was the great highway in Egypt, and an Egyptian would own several kinds of boats: travelling, fishing and pleasure boats. If he were going off on an expedition for several days, a kitchen boat would accompany the travelling boat, as none of the vessels were very large and there was not much space for cooking in the travelling boat itself. The boats gave the river a very gay appearance for they were brightly painted, and the sails of boats belonging to great nobles were often richly embroidered.

Hunting was another favourite amusement; some animals were hunted for food, others for the sport or for the sake of their skins, and the Egyptians often went out in light papyrus skiffs to hunt the waterfowl and animals found in the reeds by the river bank.

The Egyptians liked good food, but their manners at meal times would seem strange to us today. They had no plates, but used thick pieces of bread in their place, on which they frequently wiped their fingers after the meal. Occasionally they used spoons, but

not always and most of the food was eaten with the fingers. The chief meal of the day was eaten about sunset, and the Egyptians loved making occasions for feasts. All the same, they believed in teaching the young to be moderate in eating and drinking, and the following instructions were given to them:

> If thou art sitting in company hate the food which thou likest; restrain thy appetite, for greediness savoureth of the beasts. Since one cup of water will quench the thirst, and a mouthful of vegetables establish the heart, and one kind of good food is as good as a large quantity, the man who permitteth his appetite to guide him is an abomination.[1]

But it was not considered polite for the guest to leave anything uneaten. "When thou art seated among the guests of a great man, accept what he giveth thee gracefully. Look before thee, nor stare at the food, nor look at it often; he who departeth from this rule is a boorish fellow."[1]

In the cool of the evening, the Egyptians would spend some time in their gardens, or on the roofs of the houses, and these hours were often enlivened by musicians, who came with harps and lyres and played until the stars shone out in the deep blue of the Egyptian sky, and it was time for rest.

[1] Translated by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge.

CHAPTER VI

Children in Ancient Egypt

For the first three years a child was always with his mother, and she carried him about with her, generally on her back, wherever she went. If she were the wife of a great lord, she would, however, leave her children to be cared for by her women. After these first years, the children ran about, wearing no clothes as a rule, except perhaps a girdle round the waist, and during this time they seem to have had a great many toys to play with: balls made of papyrus or of leather, or stuffed with chopped straw, and dolls of all kinds, clay dolls, wooden dolls, dolls with hair made of beads, and dolls without any hair at all; they also had toy animals of every description. In the British Museum there is a small wooden cat with crystal eyes, and a movable jaw and metal teeth, which must have been a great treasure to some Egyptian child.

The children of the peasants probably never went to school, and no girls seem to have been taught reading or writing, but the well-to-do boys were sent to school, or as the Egyptians said, they became "writers in the house of books." The first thing a boy was taught in school was to write, and Egyptian

writing is very difficult to do well, but the boys worked hard and they practised their writing by copying out sayings of their wise men. Some of the most ancient of these wise Sayings or "Maxims" were written by Ptah-hotep, who lived in Memphis about 3500 B.C. He was one of the teachers of a royal prince, and the King attached great importance to the learning of such Maxims. "Instruct thou my son", he said, "in the words of wisdom of olden time. It is instruction of this kind alone that formeth the character of the sons of noblemen, and the youth who hearkeneth to such instruction will acquire a right understanding and the faculty of judging justly, and he will not feel weary of his duties."

Some of the ancient wisdom taught an Egyptian child ran as follows:

Be diligent at all times. Do more than is commanded. Waste not the time wherein thou canst labour.

The man that uttereth ill-natured words, must not expect to receive good-natured deeds.

Seek silence for thyself.

If thou journeyest on a road made by thy hands each day, thou wilt arrive at the place where thou wouldest be.

Besides writing, they learned some arithmetic, addition, subtraction and a clumsy way of multiplying. There exists a papyrus called "Directions for knowing all dark things," some of which "dark things" are problems in arithmetic.

Many boys did not learn more than this, but some went on to the colleges of the priests, where they were

taught a great deal about their religion, and some astronomy. One of the chief colleges was at Heliopolis, famous for its school of astronomy. Nothing stands now of those ancient college buildings, all that is left is an obelisk, which has stood in the same spot for four thousand years, pointing to the sky which was studied there by sages of old.

Lessons at school began early in the morning, and lasted until noon, when the boys "left the school with cries of joy," and had their lunch which was brought to the school by their mothers, and which usually consisted of three bread cakes and two jugs of beer. Egyptian boys were frequently punished, chiefly by being flogged. An Egyptian saying was that "a boy's ears are on his back." They were punished for being lazy, late or inattentive, and once an exceedingly naughty boy was locked up for three months in a room in a temple. Egyptian boys seem to have taken their punishments with a good grace and as a matter of course, for they were a cheerful people, and their lives do not seem to have been made gloomy by this severity towards them in their youth. One boy wrote in later years to his teacher: "I was with thee since I was brought up as a child; thou didst beat my back and thy instructions went into my ear." [1] We do not know whether they had much or any homework, but they seem to have had plenty of time for games and expeditions out into the country when their fathers went hunting or fishing.

One thing was taught every Egyptian child with the very greatest care, and that was courtesy and

[1] Translated by A. Erman.

respect to all who were older than he. He might never sit down whilst someone older was standing: "Sit not down when another is standing up, if he be older than thou, even if thy rank in life be higher than his," [2] and at all times his manners were expected to be very good. His parents were the chief people to whom he was to show courtesy, and especially his mother, for few nations have shown more love and honour and respect to their mothers than the ancient Egyptians. Here is some advice an Egyptian once gave his son:

Thou shalt never forget what thy mother hath done for thee. She bare thee and nourished thee in all manner of ways. She nursed thee for three years. She brought thee up, and when thou didst enter the school, and wast instructed in the writings, she came daily to thy master with bread and beer from her house. If thou forgettest her, she might blame thee; she might lift up her hands to God, and He would hear her complaint

There was much family affection amongst the Egyptians, and on the tomb walls are often found such sayings as: "I was one beloved of his father, praised of his mother, whom his brothers and sisters loved." [1]

[2]Maxims of Ani.
[1]Translated by J. H. Breasted.

CHAPTER VII

The Pharaoh

In the earliest times the land of Egypt was supposed to have been ruled by the gods, who lived on earth and mixed with the people. But at length they decided to leave the earth and return to heaven, and Horus, the last King who was also a god, appointed his son, whose mother had been an Egyptian maiden, to succeed him as king. This king was, therefore, supposed to be half-god and half-man, and so it came about that the Egyptians continued to worship their kings as divine, and their statues were placed beside those of the gods. This supposed divine origin of the kings helps us to understand why the Egyptians made their statues so enormous. These kings were not men like themselves, they were related to the gods, they were the all-powerful rulers and conquerors, who were to be not only obeyed, but feared and worshipped.

The king in Egypt was known as the Pharaoh. The name Pharaoh is the equivalent of our word "king," though the real meaning of the Egyptian word is "Great House." Great honour and reverence were always paid the Pharaoh. The highest nobles prostrated themselves on the ground when they came

into his presence, pretending that they were blinded by his glory. It was a very great honour to be allowed to carry the king's chair or his sandals, and on an inscription in one of the tombs, it is recorded of the noble buried there, that he had been of such great importance and distinction, that the Pharaoh had not only allowed him to kiss the ground under his feet but the royal foot itself! Court etiquette was very elaborate, and every want of the Pharaoh was in the charge of some official. The kings were well educated, and as princes had often had experience in state service of various kinds.

The Pharaoh of three thousand years ago was a very busy man, for at that time the Egyptians ruled over a large empire. His work would begin early in the morning. First of all, certain officials would bring him letters and documents to read or sign. Perhaps news would have come from one of the generals who were leading the army against an enemy, and the Pharaoh would have to decide what commands to send him, for he had absolute power, and though he might ask the advice of his ministers, he was not obliged to take it, and whatever might be his word, it became law. There would also be reports from the officials sent to superintend the work of bringing the stone from the quarries for the great buildings started by the Pharaoh; or merchants on the royal ships sailing up the Nile as far as they could go, would report on the treasures they were bringing back.

When all this business was over, it would be time for the Pharaoh to give audience to those who wished

to see him. This occupied a long time, for there were always a great many people to see him, and it took each one some time to get to what he really wanted to say, as everyone who spoke to the Pharaoh had to begin by making him a flattering little speech, telling him how great and powerful he was, none like him in the world, the joy of his people, and a god in his glory dazzling all those who came near him.

The Pharaoh would also spend a great deal of his time in the temple, and on great occasions it was he who offered the sacrifices to the god in place of the priests, for he was half-god himself, and so he had the right to approach the god in his shrine.

Two of the greatest Pharaohs were Thutmose III and Ramses II. Thutmose III reigned immediately after Queen Hatshepsut, and he was one of the most renowned conquerors in history. The record of his campaigns is inscribed on the walls of Karnak and a Hymn of Victory celebrates his deeds. Long after his death, his name was engraved on countless scarabs as a charm to protect the wearer against evil. He erected a number of obelisks, but none of them are now in the land of the Pharaoh; they are scattered, and are to be found not only in the Old but also in the New World; one of them stands on the banks of the Thames in London, where it is known as Cleopatra's Needle, and another is in New York.

Ramses II was another great warrior who waged war against the Hittites, in which he showed great daring and courage. He was one of the builders of Egypt both of cities and temples, and huge statues of him have been found. It was probably Ramses II

D 65 M5 13872

who made the Hebrew slaves work for him in the building of his new treasure cities, and who oppressed them so cruelly.

When a Pharaoh returned in triumph from war, a holiday would be proclaimed. A great procession would wend its way to the temple. Priests with garlands and flowers headed it, then would follow the army, with the Pharaoh in the centre, standing upright in his chariot, and as he passed, the people would prostrate themselves on the ground before him. The prisoners formed part of the procession; they marched tied together with ropes, and sometimes the king would drive a number of them before him. The entrance gates to the Temple would be gaily decorated with flags and banners, and the long procession would enter. Trumpet blasts then summoned the soldiers to approach the altar, on which they laid twigs of olive as symbols of peace. A stately service would then follow, and at its conclusion the king drove back to his palace. Once again the people thronging the streets would bow low as, standing upright in his chariot and paying little heed to the adoration of the crowd, he passed on his way. In his own eyes, and in those of his people, he was the Pharaoh, the Son of the Sun, the mightiest man on earth.

CHAPTER VIII

The Egyptian Gods and Heaven

I. PRIMITIVE BELIEFS ABOUT THE GODS

In very primitive times, man was so much occupied in learning how to satisfy the practical needs of his body, that he had but little time to devote to anything else. He was afraid of nature, because he could not control her. But by degrees he began to realize that some power must be in control, that the sun did not shine, nor the wind blow, nor the rain water the earth of themselves, but that these things were ordered by some power greater than man. That one power could govern the world was far too great an idea for his understanding, and so he began to associate each power of nature both good and bad with a different god. Animals were included in this worship, because they too, showed the characteristics of god-like powers; at first they were worshipped as types of these powers, but in time they came to be regarded as gods themselves, and hence it came about that the gods were frequently given animal forms. It was also believed that the gods sometimes visited the earth in the form of animals, a belief which easily led to the worship of the animals themselves. Beside

these nature gods, there were supposed to be others whose special care it was to watch over the interests of a particular group of people. At first each family had its own guardian spirit, later this spirit grew more important and he became the god of the tribe, then of the city and lastly of the state. Each great nation of the ancient world had its own national god.

II. EGYPTIAN RELIGION

The great god of Egypt was the Sun. The Egyptians worshipped him under the name of Ra or Amon-Ra. They looked upon him as the source of life and goodness and righteousness, lord over all the gods and the special protector of kings. They thought of him as "compassionate to those that fear him and as hearing those that cry unto him." They said he would "protect the weak against the strong, that he knew those who knew him, rewarded those who served him, and protected those who followed him."[1]

It was Ra, the Sun-God who sailed in his golden boat across the sky, and in all the paintings of him, he is made to wear the sun-disk, a symbol of the goodness of the sun. But the sun could also destroy and scorch, and because he had this power, the Egyptians also gave him the asp as a symbol of his destructive power. The greatest of the temples at Thebes, was built in honour of Amon-Ra.

Thoth was the god of intelligence and wisdom. He was supposed to have invented writing, to have taught men mathematics and other sciences and arts,

[1] Translated by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge.

especially music and sculpture, and also how to measure the flood of the Nile, and to study the movements of the moon and the stars.

Hathor was the goddess of the sky, the Queen of Heaven, and she was frequently given the head of a cow as her symbol. She had a gentle and kindly nature, and she was especially loved and worshipped by women, who called her the "Lady of the Heavens," and the "Queen of Beauty and of Love."

Egyptian gods are nearly always represented as carrying a Key of Life in their hands, a symbol which belonged to them alone.

Like most Eastern peoples, the Egyptians were superstitious, and they believed that amulets and charms would keep evil luck away from them. The scarab, a kind of beetle on which was engraved an inscription or the name of a king, was one of such charms, and a great many of them have been found in the tombs.

The Egyptians paid respect to animals and, as we have seen, they frequently gave their gods partly animal forms. The bird ibis, the cat and the crocodile were all held sacred, and some were embalmed and buried in burying places of their own. The crocodile was looked upon as the evil power in nature. The cat was so sacred, that to kill one, even unintentionally, meant instant death to the offender. But the most sacred animal of all was the Bull Apis, who was considered as representing the Nile. Only an animal of a certain colour and with certain marks could be an Apis, and there could only be one at a time in all Egypt. He lived at Memphis, in a splendid stable

to which was attached a temple; he was waited on by his own special priests and at certain festivals was shown to the people in a stately procession. When the Apis died, there was mourning in all the land, and the priests had to search until another bull with the right markings was found, when there was great joy and public rejoicing and holiday everywhere.

The Egyptians worshipped a great many gods, and this made their religion very complicated, because they feared that neglect of any god would bring some kind of suffering or loss upon them, either in this world or the next. They paid great respect to the gods in their temples, they sang very beautiful hymns in their honour, and they sought to please them by rich gifts and sacrifices. Herodotus, the Greek historian who has told us so much about the Egyptians, said of them: "The Egyptians are very religious, surpassing all men in the honours they pay to the gods."

The Egyptians were a people of high ideals, but there was a very material side to their religion, for they believed that sin could be paid for by offerings and sacrifices, and though great importance was attached to the character of a man, it was because they believed that his prosperity either on earth or in a future life would be hurt by his wrong-doing.

III. THE EGYPTIAN HEAVEN AND THE JUDGMENT OF THE DEAD

The most important religious teaching of the Egyptians was that which concerned their belief in a

future life. When an Egyptian died, his body was made into a mummy. This was done because of the Egyptian belief that the happiness of a spirit in heaven depended on the preservation of his body in the tomb. To ensure this the body was embalmed, and when that had been carefully done, it was wrapped in linen which had been soaked in resins and sweet-smelling spices. As each part of the body was wrapped up, the priests recited prayers and uttered charms which were to help the dead man to get safely to heaven.

There were three methods employed in making a mummy which varied in expense. Only the rich could afford the most elaborate method and the larger tombs, but the priests assured the poor, that if certain words were repeated over the bodies of their dead, and that if the earthly life had been righteous, all would go well with the soul at last. All Egyptians, however, believed that the greater the care with which the burial ceremonies had been completed, the surer was the soul of future happiness.

When the mummy was ready, it was placed in the first coffin which was made in the shape of the body and which had a gilded face, and sometimes it was decorated still further with beads and precious stones. This case was then put into another coffin, which was covered both inside and out with pictures and hieroglyphics. The inner case was always turned over, so that the body lay on its side with the face turned towards the eye panel, a panel on the outer coffin on which two eyes were painted, in order that the dead body might "behold the Lord of the Hori-

zon, when he sails across the heavens." The coffin was then ready to be placed in the tomb, and the Egyptian believed that the soul started on its way to heaven.

The Egyptians thought that heaven was a wonderful land far away in the West; they called it the "Fields of Bulrushes," or the "Fields of Content." It was a land of corn and plenty, of trees and streams. Arrived there, the soul led a very pleasant life of ease; he could sow and reap, sail in his boat, sit under the shade of the trees, eat and drink, and play games with his companions. The rich noblemen who had always had slaves to work for them on earth, wanted their slaves in heaven. In order to be sure of having plenty, they placed little statues in their tombs and they engraved on them the answer each was to make when his master called him. The master is supposed to have said to his slaves: "O ye figures, be ye ever watchful to work, to plough and sow the fields, to fill with water the canals, and to carry sand from the east to the west," and each little figure was to answer his master: "Here am I, ready when thou callest." The old Egyptian word for an answer was "Ushabti," and so these figures are called Ushabti or Answerers.

But the soul did not reach heaven immediately after death, there was a long and perilous journey to be taken along difficult and dangerous roads, that were haunted by serpents and dragons, demons and other terrors. But the Egyptians believed that certain charms, if properly recited would drive them all away. These magic charms and spells were collected by the Egyptians in a book, which we call the "Book

of the Dead," but which they called the "Book of the Entrance into Light," for they said that souls did not "depart as those who are dead, but they depart as those who are living."[1] These charms were beautifully written on papyri, and a copy of the book or parts of it were buried with the dead, in order that the soul might have them on its journey, but many of the charms had already been taught the Egyptians during their life-time.

The first part of this perilous journey led the soul to the gates of the palace of Osiris, who was King of the Underworld, and in whose palace was the Hall of Truth where the souls were judged. The Egyptians were the first of the ancient peoples who believed that happiness in heaven depended on the character of a person whilst on earth, and before reaching the Egyptian heaven the soul had to be carefully judged. At the entrance to the palace of Osiris, the soul recited this prayer: "Grant that I may come unto you; I who have not lied, nor borne false witness, but who feed on truth, I who have given bread to the hungry and drink to him that was athirst and who have clothed the naked with garments. My mouth is pure; my two hands are pure." These words may be compared with the familiar words in the New Testament: "For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in; naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me." These two sayings seem to set the same standard for character, but in reality they

[1] From A. Erman.

are very different, for the principle underlying those of the Egyptian was that good deeds are performed for the sake of the reward. But it must be remembered that the Egyptian standard was one of nearly two thousand years before that of the New Testament.

When the gates of the palace of Osiris were opened, the soul entered the great Hall of Truth. All round the hall sat forty-two judges, each of whom had power to punish a particular sin, and close at hand was a pair of scales, beside which stood the god Thoth, ready to see that everything was done justly and fairly, and to mark down on his tablets the result of the judgment. The soul first made a long statement to the judges, saying that he had not committed the sins they could punish; but that was not enough, for he might not be speaking the truth; so his heart was taken and placed on one of the scales, whilst a feather, the Egyptian symbol for truth, was placed on the other. Whilst this was being done, the soul cried out to his heart not to testify against him, and he said: "My heart of my being! Make no stand against me when testifying, and make no failure in respect of me before the Master of the Balance."[1] If the heart was not of the right weight, it proved that the man was false, and his heart was thrown to a dreadful and horrible monster, called the "Eater of the Dead," who sat behind the scales waiting to devour the hearts of the wicked; he had the head of a crocodile, the body of a lion and the hind-quarters of a hippopotamus. But if the heart

[1] Translated by Sir E. A. Wallis Budge.

weighed right, Thoth declared to the judges that all was well, and then Horus, the son of Osiris, led the soul into the presence of his father, who declared that as he was just, he was fit to go to heaven.

The Egyptians believed that Osiris had been made King of the Underworld by the gods. They thought that long ago he had been a good King of Egypt, and that he and his wife Isis were very happy. Osiris was supposed to have taught his people agriculture and to have given them good laws, and Isis to have shown them how to make bread, and she was said to have been very skilful in healing all manner of sickness. But Set, the brother of Osiris, was wicked and jealous of him and he conspired against him. He invited Osiris to a feast at his house, and after the feast he showed to his guests a beautiful chest. He persuaded Osiris to lie down in it, and as soon as he was in, Set and his conspirators shut down the lid and fastened it and carried it to the Nile. They threw it into the river, and it was quickly washed away. Isis was in despair, and broken-hearted she searched for the chest until she found it, where it had been washed up on the river bank. She hid it and went to find her son Horus, in order that he might avenge his father. But before they returned, Set found the body, and cut it in pieces and scattered them in every direction. But even so, the faithful Isis searched again until she found them, and reverently buried them. Horus, however, challenged Set to fight and he defeated him. Thereupon the gods assembled and declared Osiris innocent of all the crimes of which Set had accused him, and they

raised Osiris from the dead and made him King of the Underworld and Judge of the Dead.

IV. A REFORMER KING

Not quite a hundred years after the death of the warrior Thutmose III, a young Pharaoh came to the throne. His name was Amenhotep IV. This King was an original and independent thinker, but he shut his mind to everything that concerned his country, except that which concerned its religious beliefs. He announced that all the gods were false, and that there was only one God, who dwelt above the sky and who looked down upon the earth through the sun, from which he took his name, the Sun-God or Aton. This was the same Sun-God who was worshipped at Heliopolis, but his worship was now purified and no animals were offered as sacrifices. The King ordered all temples to other gods to be closed, and wherever the names of gods were found inscribed on the walls of the temples or on obelisks, they were to be erased. He had a special hatred for Amon the god of Thebes, and as his own name, Amenhotep, included that of the god, he changed it to Ikhnaton, which means "Aton is satisfied." It was not enough for him to close the temples, Thebes itself became hateful to him, and he built a new city out near the desert, where the village of Tell-el-Amarna now stands, which was henceforth to be the capital.

The religion of Ikhnaton was a very pure and beautiful one. He believed that there was only One

God, who was a father to men of all races, and his faith came nearer to that of the great Hebrew prophets than any other faith of the ancient world. But Ikhnaton was young and intolerant, and the gods of Egypt had been worshipped for centuries. It is never possible to force men into a new belief and the priests were a very powerful body of men who could not be defied. It was probably their hostility which decided the King to leave Thebes. The nobles who had supported his predecessors, who had fought for them and with them, and helped to make them great Pharaohs, saw dissatisfaction arising all over Egypt. Revolts occurred against the king, and when he died, because he had neglected his duties as Pharaoh, he left Egypt weak and torn by strife.

The new city was soon forsaken by the Pharaohs who followed Ikhnaton; they returned to the old capital and the old gods. His palace was deserted and was never rebuilt. Three thousand years went by, and an old peasant woman who lived at Tell-el-Amarna was one day turning over the sand, looking for antiquities for which European travellers were so constantly asking. Little did she imagine that she was wandering over the spot where once a King had dwelt. But she discovered there a large number of clay tablets, which were found to be the correspondence written in cuneiform script, of the chief rulers in Egypt and Western Asia in the time of Ikhnaton, and his predecessor. These letters tell the story of how the reformer king's neglect of his kingdom had wrought dissatisfaction everywhere, and they give us an excellent picture of the state of Egypt and the

countries with which she came into closest contact during his reign.

Ikhnaton failed in what he tried to do because of his intolerance and lack of sympathy with those who disagreed with him, and his figure, as we look back to it is a lonely one, but his name stands out across the centuries as that of the first thinker who tried to break through the rigid conventions of the past in his search for truth.

IKHNATON'S HYMN TO THE SUN-GOD[1]

Thy dawning is beautiful in the horizon of heaven,
O living Aton, Beginning of Life!
When thou risest in the eastern horizon of heaven,
Thou fillest every land with thy beauty;
For thou art beautiful, great, glittering, high over the earth;
Thy rays, they encompass the lands, even all thou hast made.
Thou art Re, and thou hast carried them all away captive;
Thou bindest them by thy love.
Though thou art afar, thy rays are on earth;
Though thou art on high, thy footprints are the day.

Egypt was said to be the "gift of the Nile" and the Egyptians knew this to be true. It was an "incomprehensible mystery" to them, and they believed that there must be a special god who cared for the river, and so it was that they worshipped him as

[1] Translated by J. H. Breasted.

Hapi (or Apis), the sacred Bull, the giver of all good things. They sang to him:

Hail to thee, Hapi! who descendest upon earth, and givest life unto Egypt. Thou who art hidden in the unknown, . . . whose waters spread upon the fields which the Sun-God hath created. Who givest life to all that are athirst. Thou, the Creator of corn, the maker of barley—do thy waters cease to flow, then are all mankind in misery; and when thou wanest in heaven, the gods themselves and all living things perish.

And so we must leave these ancient Egyptians. Their history does not end here, but their civilization had reached the point where it was influencing the ancient world, and was to be an influence to nations not then born. The Egyptians themselves could not advance further, because their minds were bound by chains to the past, but they had sown the seed from which greater things were to develop. We know many things today that they did not know, but every day we use things that were first thought of by them: our calendars may be more correct, our books and paper more convenient, our paintings and sculpture more full of grace and imagination, but we owe the beginnings of all these things to the ancient dwellers on the banks of the Nile.

THE ASSYRIANS AND THE BABYLONIANS

THE ASSYRIANS AND BABYLONIANS

CHAPTER I

The Land of Mesopotamia

Long ago, when men were first learning how to do things; when they were finding out how to write, how to build and how to make all kinds of things needed in their daily life; when they were first finding out something about nature, about the sun and the moon and the stars, about the rivers and the sea; and when the men of each country were learning that they were not the only people in the world, but that others were living in lands across the deserts and beyond the seas, there were two countries that were greater and of more importance than the others. These two were Egypt, and Assyria and Babylon.

Assyria and Babylon were the countries that were found along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates, and to the northern part of these lands the Greeks gave the name "Mesopotamia," which is the Greek for the "land between the rivers." The earliest civilizations developed on the banks of rivers, for the waterways served as roads and made communication easier, it helped to make the land more fertile

and so the supply of food was more certain. Of the two rivers in Mesopotamia, the Euphrates has been the more important; its current was not so swift as that of the Tigris, the banks were less steep, and the towns and villages in its valley were more protected from attacks that might be made by unfriendly peoples from the East.

The traveller who goes to this land today finds in the North a desolate, bare and uncultivated plain, and in the South swamps and marshy districts, full of fever and malaria. In ancient times this dreary land was the garden of the world, and tradition tells us that in one beautiful region was the Garden of Eden. In the winter the climate was so soft and mild, that when Babylon formed part of the Persian empire, the Great Kings made Babylon one of their winter residences, in order to escape the cold of their own Persian land. This land between the rivers was rich and fertile, and great towns full of palaces and temples and with busy crowded streets were found on the banks of the rivers. Herodotus tells us of the wonderful grain he found growing there; he says: "The leaf of the wheat and barley is as much as three inches in width, and the stalks of the millet are so tall that no one who has never been in that country would believe me, were I to mention their height." Herodotus probably exaggerated, but in those days Babylonia produced so much grain that she supplied nearly all the known world. The land was also rich in palm trees, and fruit abounded. The rivers were full of fish, and waterfowl of all kinds lived in the reeds and rushes by the river banks.

What has happened to change this country? In those ancient times the kings and rulers saw to it that the land was irrigated. They built canals and regulated the floods, and so brought water to those parts of the country that otherwise would have been dry and parched. If all this were done today, Mesopotamia would be just as fertile as it was of old, but the land was ruled for such long years by the Turks, who have neglected everything that was useful, that this rich and fertile country has become a wilderness.

This land is just about as old as Egypt, but the dry and sandy soil of Egypt has preserved the ancient buildings in a way that the soil in Mesopotamia has not done, and so this country is not as rich in monuments of the past. There was not as good stone for building as there was in Egypt, and so the people used sun-dried bricks. Dotted about on the plains are mounds that show us where once there were cities. These cities began by being just a cluster of houses forming a little town, for people wanted to live near each other for safety. Then they would build a temple to some particular god who was supposed to have them in his special care. The chief man in the town would rule them as their king, and would build a palace for himself, and so gradually the town would become larger and the inhabitants would build strong walls round it as a defence against all enemies. The fields were generally outside the walls, though there were gardens within, so that in case of a siege the people would not starve. At first there were a number of these independent towns, but

after a while there were some very strong kings who united them, and by gradually extending their power formed mighty kingdoms, which developed into powerful empires. Four great peoples ruled in turn over these lands; they were known as Sumerians, Babylonians, Assyrians, and Later Babylonians or Chaldæans.

These peoples were very remarkable: they built great cities, they wrote many books and had large libraries, they knew a great deal about the stars, and the Babylonians were traders and merchants. The Assyrians were a very cruel nation, they waged constant war against their neighbours and were a scourge to the ancient world, until at last they were themselves destroyed.

After the fall of these empires, there followed a time when no one remembered anything more of them. The cities fell into ruin and were slowly covered up by dust and sand, until they looked only like great rubbish heaps. The gardens and fields became waste and desolate, the canals fell into disuse, and every year the desert sands drifted more over the land until everything was hidden. All memories were blotted out and history became silent. Then suddenly out of these dreary wastes, the buried cities reappeared, voices from the past spoke in the midst of the silence, and the life and splendour of these ancient peoples was discovered.

It came about in this way. From time to time explorers from Europe had taken home with them bricks and tablets covered with a strange writing, and the imagination of scholars who knew what a

flourishing place Mesopotamia had once been, began to see what might possibly be hidden under the dreary-looking mounds, and what secrets of the past they might discover, if only they could find more of the engraved bricks and learn to read the strange writing.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century a French consul had been sent to this dreary land. He was interested in the ancient past and had been told that if he would dig and search in the mounds, he would find treasures. Soon after his arrival he employed a great many Arab workmen to dig under one of the mounds, but for some time they found nothing. One day, however, a stranger Arab came wandering by and watched them at work, and on hearing what they wanted to find, he told the Frenchman, that if what he wanted was stones and bricks covered with carving, he would find plenty of them at a mound a few hours' journey away. So they went and began to dig, and what did they find? Not only a great many carved stones and bricks, but what no eye had seen for centuries. They found the lower part of a whole palace, the walls of which were covered with the most wonderful sculptures which represented scenes from Assyrian life: war and feasting and hunting, and at the doors stood strange beasts with heads like men, wings like angels, and bodies like bulls and lions. They worked hard and soon the whole palace and part of the town near it was unearthed. All the rooms could be traced: reception rooms, bedrooms, kitchens; and the walls were decorated with sculptures showing the life of the people who once had lived there.

A few years later an Englishman began to work on another mound. From his boyhood he had loved adventure, he had read the *Arabian Nights* and every tale of the mysterious East he could find, and now it seemed to him that his boyhood dreams of really finding hidden cities of the past were about to come true. He spent the night before he began to work on the mound in an Arab tent, and he has told us of his thoughts as he lay awake waiting for the dawn.

Hopes long cherished were now to be realized or to end in disappointment. Visions of palaces underground, of gigantic monsters, of sculptured figures, and endless inscriptions floated before me. After forming plan after plan for removing the earth and extricating these treasures, I fancied myself wandering in a maze of chambers from which I could find no outlet. Then, again, all was reburied and I was standing on the grass-covered mound. Exhausted, I was at length sinking into sleep when, hearing the voice of Awad (his Arab host), I rose from my carpet and joined him outside the hovel.[1]

It was morning and work began, and did his hopes come true? He found more than he had dared expect. A great palace was unearthed full of sculpture, and guarding the silent palace were found more winged bulls and lions. As these creatures rose mysteriously out of the ground, the Arabs were in great fear, for it seemed to them that these silent winged beings were spirits rising out of the underworld to do them harm. But their fears vanished when the strange beasts were found to be of stone.

[1] Layard, *Nineveh and its Remains.*

They were sent to London, where they now stand at guard over the treasures from these lands that are in the British Museum.

But an even greater discovery was then made, though it did not seem to be such a thrilling one at first. Some rooms were found full of little clay tablets covered with writing. When this writing had been deciphered, it was discovered that these tablets were books, and they were full of stories of the beliefs of the Assyrians and Babylonians about how the world was made, and the stories of their great heroes. There were also books of science telling about the stars, and medicine, and there were a great many letters.

Some of the most interesting of the tablets were those on which was written the story of a Flood, very similar to the Hebrew story in the book of Genesis, and those tablets which have been called the Creation Tablets, because from them we learn how the Babylonians believed the world had been created; and like the Flood story, these, too, in many ways resemble the Hebrew story of the Creation. Marduk was the Babylonian Creator, and the story tells us that he

laid a reed on the face of the waters,
He formed dust and poured it out beside the reed,
That he might cause the gods to dwell in the dwelling of their hearts' desire,
He formed mankind;
With him the goddess Aruru created the seed of mankind.
The beasts of the field and living things in the field he formed;

The Tigris and Euphrates he created and established in
their place;
Their names he proclaimed in a goodly manner.
The grass, the rush of the marsh, the reed and the forest
he created.
The lands, the marshes and the swamps,
The wild cow and her young, the wild calf,
The ewe and her young and the lamb of the fold.[1]

It is from these discoveries that after two thousand years of silence, we have been able to learn about the life of the people who lived along the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates.

[1] Translated by C. F. Kent.

CHAPTER II

The Story of Assyria

Assyria was the great robber nation of the ancient world. The other nations made war for various reasons: sometimes they were attacked and so had to defend themselves, sometimes they were ruled by an ambitious king who wanted to extend his empire and so made war on his neighbours. But for Assyria war was her chief occupation. She loved wealth, and many of her wars were waged in order to seize the trade of other nations and so add to her riches. The power of Assyria increased with every fresh conquest, and she was feared and hated by everyone, so that when her hour of greatness at length passed and she was destroyed, the whole ancient world rejoiced.

No Assyrian king could be peaceful, and war was looked upon as his rightful occupation. The Assyrian army generally consisted of about fifty or sixty thousand men, and there were war-chariots, horsemen and infantry. The king and the great nobles had tents, but the common soldiers generally slept on the bare ground. A special cooking tent was taken for the king, and his royal chair of state always accompanied him. The soldiers wore bronze helmets and fought with bows and arrows, spears and

swords, and they defended themselves with metal or wicker shields. The approach of an Assyrian army spread terror over the land. The Hebrew prophet Isaiah has given us a vivid picture of what it was like:

They shall come with speed quickly, none shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken: whose arrows are sharp, and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs shall be counted like flint, and their wheels like a whirlwind; their roaring shall be like a lion, they shall roar like young lions; yea, they shall roar and lay hold of the prey, and shall carry it away safe, and none shall deliver it. And in that day they shall roar against them like the roaring of the sea: and if one look unto the land, behold darkness and sorrow, and the light is darkened in the heavens thereof.[1]

When a city was being besieged, battering rams were used, and every kind of cruelty was practised on the unfortunate enemy who was taken prisoner. One great conqueror has left the following description of one of his campaigns:

To the city of Tela I approached. The city was very strong; three fortress walls surrounded it. The inhabitants trusted to their strong walls and their numerous army; they did not come down nor embrace my feet. With battle and slaughter I attacked the city and captured it. Three thousand of their fighting men I slew with the

[1] Isaiah, v. 26–29

sword; their spoil, their goods, their oxen I carried away; I cut off the hands of the young men, of others the noses, the ears and the fingers; I put out the eyes of many soldiers. I built up a pyramid of the living and a pyramid of heads. On high I hung up their heads in the neighbourhood of their city. Their young men and their maidens I burned with fire; the city I overthrew, I dug it up, and burned it with fire; I annihilated it.[1]

This same king built a great palace. Round each room were a number of alabaster slabs depicting his deeds and wars, and the inscriptions give the history of his reign from year to year. He describes his palace in these words:

A palace for my royal dwelling-place, for the glorious seat of my royalty, I founded for ever, and splendidly planned it; I surrounded it with a cornice of copper. Sculptures of the creatures of land and sea carved in alabaster I made, and placed them at the doors. Lofty door posts of cedar I made, and sheathed them with copper, and set them upon the gates. Thrones of costly woods, dishes of ivory containing silver, gold, lead, copper and iron, the spoil of my hand, taken from conquered lands, I deposited therein.[2]

After a victorious war, the Assyrian king would spend a time in feasting and celebrating his triumph. One of his favourite amusements was hunting, more especially lion hunting. In earlier days the king hunted wild lions, and these exploits were always

[1] From James Baikie, *People and Lands of the Bible.*
[2] *Ibid.*

magnificently recorded in sculpture on the walls of his palace. Inscriptions gave all the thrilling details, some of which were doubtless exaggerated in order to impress on the mind of the people the majesty and power of the king. One such inscription runs: "I killed a hundred and twenty lions in my youthful ardour, in the fulness of my manly might on my own feet, and eight hundred lions I killed from my chariot. All kinds of beasts and fowls I added to my hunting spoils."[1] In later times the lions were kept in the royal park and tamed, so when the actual hunt took place, there could have been but little danger and none of the thrill of the earlier hunts.

The most important Assyrian city was Nineveh, but as the Assyrians lived chiefly for war, it never became as great a trading city as Babylon, but caravans went out in all directions, and the Assyrians made good roads over which their merchants as well as their armies could travel. In Nineveh itself there were splendid buildings, temples and palaces, and the latter had gardens and parks attached to them. One king tried to make a kind of botanical garden, in which he planted trees he had found in the foreign lands he had conquered. He gives this account of it:

As for the cedar and the almug, from the countries I have conquered, these trees, which none of the kings my fathers that were before me had planted, I took, and in the gardens of my land I planted, and by the name of garden I called them; whatsoever in my land there was not I took, and I established the gardens of Assyria.[2]

[1] From Ragozin, *Story of Assyria*. [2] From A. H. Sayce.

These gardens were generally planted by the river, so that they were kept well watered, and summer-houses were often built in the midst of them. This king who cared so much for his garden also brought cultivated grapes into Assyria, and it was evidently so well known that he liked any unusual or curious specimens of natural objects, that once when a King of Egypt wished to honour him with a gift, he sent the Assyrian a crocodile from the Nile.

Nineveh was surrounded by massive double walls, of which the inner one was called the "Wall whose splendour overthrows the Enemy," and the outer, the "Wall that terrifies the Foe." Fifteen gates led into this city, which to the ancient world seemed a symbol of arrogance and pride, for it had been built and made splendid by the tribute taken from conquered peoples who had been crushed and oppressed by the might of Assyria.

The Assyrians did not make as much use of the rivers as did the other ancient peoples. When an army wanted to cross a stream, bridges of boats were sometimes made, but generally only the chief men were ferried over in boats, and the others had to swim across, though they usually had the help of inflated skins. Their boats were rafts or coracles of skins stretched on a wooden framework.

As the Assyrians grew richer, they grew more luxurious; their palaces became more and more gorgeous, and their feasting more sumptuous. They became skilled in all kinds of craftsmanship, the oldest known transparent glass was found at Nineveh, and they might have contributed great things to the

world, but their cruelty and delight in making others suffer made them like tigers, and they failed to use the gifts they had for fine or noble purposes. There was, however, one king, who, though he was a fierce warrior, cared something more than the others for peaceful pursuits. This was Assurbanipal, to whose care for books we owe so much of our knowledge of ancient Assyria. He had copies made of the history of both his own country and of Babylon, and these books were preserved in the royal library, where they were at the disposal of all who wished to consult them. Assurbanipal stated several times that the library at Nineveh was "for the use of readers."

Assurbanipal was one of the last of the great kings of Assyria, and with him ended the splendour of Nineveh. These last kings had been so greedy for conquest that they did not give the nation time to recover from their ceaseless wars, and so they exhausted the nation. Assyria had been famous for her sieges, but at last in 606 B. C. this "great Besieger was herself besieged," and she fell. The news was carried all over the ancient world, and at first it could hardly be believed. Nineveh was the greatest city in the world, yet she had fallen! When it was realized that Assyria was destroyed, never to rise again, a wave of exultation passed over the ancient world, and a Hebrew prophet gave voice to the universal feeling:

Woe to the City of Blood,
All of her guile, robbery-full, ceaseless rapine!

Hark the whip,
And the rumbling of the wheel,
And horses galloping,
And the rattling dance of the chariot!
Cavalry at the charge, and flash of sabres,
And lightning of lances,
Mass of slain and weight of corpses,
Endless dead bodies—
They stumble on their dead!

Everyone seeing thee shall shrink from thee and say:
"Shattered is Nineveh—who will pity her?
Whence shall I seek for comforters to thee?"

Asleep are they shepherds, O King of Assyria,
Thy nobles do slumber,
Thy people are strewn on the mountains,
Without any to gather.
There is no healing of thy wreck,
Fatal thy wound!
All who hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hand at thee,
For upon whom hath not thy cruelty passed without ceasing?

[1]Translated by Sir G. A. Smith.

CHAPTER III

Cuneiform Writing

Assurbanipal collected a library, but the books that made up this library did not look in the least like our books, neither were they like the Egyptian papyrus rolls. In ancient days there were two ways of writing: one was to use a brush or a reed and with different coloured pigments to paint what was to be written on a soft material that could be rolled: this was the method used by the Egyptians. The other way was to take a tablet of soft clay or wax, and to scratch the writing on it with a sharp-pointed tool, called a stylus; this was what the Assyrians and Babylonians did.

Like the Egyptians, they began by having a picture writing, but even sooner than the Egyptians they began to find it very tiresome to have to draw so many pictures, especially as it was difficult to draw well on clay, and so they dropped off bits here and bits there, until there were only signs left. Assyrian and Babylonian writing is called "cuneiform," a word which means "wedge-shaped," and it is quite easy to see why it has this name. With his papyrus, and his reed pens and paints for ink, the Egyptian scribe could make graceful lines and pictures for his writing,

but the Assyrian and Babylonian with his sharp stylus and clay could only make deep cuts and thick wedge-shaped marks, and so the cuneiform writing is not so pretty to look at as the hieroglyphics. The characters were very small, so small that a magnifying glass has to be used in deciphering them. It is possible that Assyrian scribes used magnifying glasses when writing, for a crystal lens was found at Nineveh.

The Egyptian book was made out of a long papyrus roll, the Assyrian or Babylonian book was made up of numbers of small clay tablets. This form of book was another reason why the cuneiform writing became so shortened. A book was a very clumsy thing, and the shorter the words, the fewer the tablets needed. But if clay books are clumsy, these ancient clay books had some good points. Egyptian papyrus was very expensive and took time to make; clay was cheap, and only needed to be pressed into the right shape and it was ready for use. When these tablets had been written on, they were baked, and this made them hard and durable: they could not be burned in the fire, nor hurt in water, and if they were broken, they could be put together again. The result for us is that there are thousands of clay tablets, covered with cuneiform writing which has been deciphered, and books about history, geography, astronomy, letters, stories and poetry have all been found. The clay tablet pages were all numbered, and in this way: if the first tablet of a story began with the words, "In the days of King Sargon," that tablet would be numbered "First tablet of In the

days of King Sargon"; the next would be, "Second tablet of In the days of King Sargon," and so on to the end. It was necessary to name the story or its beginning every time, as there was no way of binding the pages together, and if they got lost or mixed up it was like a very difficult puzzle to put them together again. Another custom, which is still to be found in some old English books, was to begin every tablet with the last few words of the preceding tablet. In this way it was not so difficult to keep the tablet pages in their right order.

Like the Egyptians, the Assyrians and Babylonians had scribes to write for them. When a letter had been written, it would be signed by pressing the seal (which every Assyrian and Babylonian wore on his wrist for the purpose), on the clay, and then it would be baked and a clay envelope would be rolled round it, and the address written on it with the stylus.

The key to the understanding of cuneiform writing was found in Persia, of which the story will be told in its own place.

CHAPTER IV

The Story of Babylonia

The most ancient race that lived near the Euphrates was that of the Sumerians. Until a very short time ago, this people seemed to belong to that far-away past that was dim and almost unreal to us. It was known that their language had survived a long time after they themselves had disappeared, for it became the religious language of the Babylonians, and all their legends and stories of their gods, their hymns and prayers were written in Sumerian.

Recently, however, tombs have been found, the contents of which show that the Sumerians had developed a civilization older even than that of Egypt. About 3500-3200 B. C. the period when Memphis was the old capital of Egypt, and Menes was uniting Upper and Lower Egypt into one kingdom, the Sumerians had developed a skill in various arts and crafts that was only attained later by the Egyptians. In the tomb of Queen Shub-Ad was found goldsmith's work, jewellery, pins, combs, exquisite headdresses of gold inlaid with coloured stones, work that could only be the result of a long period of development. Work in other metals, bowls and goblets, inlaid lyres and harps, mosaic work, carvings in ivory

have also been found, all of which for artistic skill and workmanship can stand worthily beside anything made later in Egypt or Babylonia.

From these discoveries it would seem that though the Sumerians as a distinct race disappeared, the later peoples who followed them inherited their civilization, and what was originally Sumerian developed gradually and almost imperceptibly into early Babylonian.

The kings of these early Babylonians became powerful about four thousand years ago. The greatest of them was called Hammurapi, and he has left us two things which tell us about the life of his time. The first is a collection of letters he wrote, and the second is a large slab of stone on which his laws are inscribed. His letters show us what were some of the duties of a Babylonian king. We can picture him sitting in his palace with his secretary by his side, to whom he dictated his letters. The secretary would take a reed stylus out of the holder at his girdle and as the King dictated, he would cover a clay tablet with wedge-shaped writing. Then he would sprinkle a handful of dry powdered clay over the soft wet tablet in order to prevent the clay from sticking to the surface. He would then write the address on the clay and send the letter out to be put in the furnace and baked.

The King had a great many things about which he had to write, for all kinds of matters that nowadays would be dealt with by various officials, in those days were directly attended to by the King himself. He may have received a letter saying that there were floods up the river and that the boats were delayed,

so he would send a reply ordering the governor of that province to clear the channel and make it navigable again. To another he would send a warning that the taxes were due and that they must be paid promptly; another governor would receive orders to punish three officials who were guilty of bribery, and he would be told quite sharply to see that the royal orders were carried out. Other letters were sent with instructions about sending labourers to certain places, or ordering slaves to be brought before him. Directions were also given for harvesting the royal corn, for sheep-shearing, and for strengthening the walls of the city. Then there were other letters to be written about certain feasts that were to be observed, and about the King's property in the country that must be looked after.

Hammurapi was one of the first of ancient kings who understood that his chief duty was to care for the well-being of his people. He drew up a code of the ancient laws of Babylon, the earliest code as yet known, and had it engraved upon a shaft of stone, at the top of which was a slab of sculpture in which he was represented as receiving the law from the Sun-God. In the prologue to his code of laws Hammurapi described himself as an exalted prince and worshipper of the gods, who had been divinely called to administer justice, to destroy all that was wicked and evil, to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, to enlighten the land and to further the welfare of the people. He declared that he had brought about plenty and abundance and made the fame of Babylon great, that he was a soldier who had no equal.

Hammurapi insisted on justice to the poor in his laws, but his ideas of punishment were the old primitive ones of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," and injuries were to be punished by inflicting on the culprit whatever he had inflicted on others. This spirit is shown in the following laws:

If a man destroy the eye of a man, his eye shall they put out.

If a man knock out the teeth of his equal, his teeth shall be knocked out.

If a doctor has put out the eye, his hands shall be cut off.

If a son strike his father, they shall cut off his fingers.

If a builder build a house for a man and does not make its construction firm, and the house which he has built collapse, that builder shall be put to death.

After the death of Hammurapi, long centuries went by, during which time the Assyrian empire rose and fell, and the land was governed by many different kings, until more than a thousand years had passed, and a very great king was ruling in Babylon. His name was Nebuchadnezzar, and he was the most important king of the later Babylonians who were also known as Chaldæans. Under him Babylon became a very great empire. He waged great wars, after one of which he conquered the Hebrews and carried them away captive to Babylon. But he also found time to beautify the city. He built temples, and leading from one of these to his palace he made a long avenue which passed through the Ishtar Gate (Ishtar was the goddess of the Evening Star to whom it was dedi-

cated), and the walls on each side of the avenue were covered with sculptured lions. There were probably about a hundred and twenty of them: some of them were white with yellow manes, others were yellow with red manes, and the background was blue. Nebuchadnezzar also built massive walls round the city to protect it, and he laid out beautiful gardens and pleasure places. The most celebrated were those known as the "Hanging Gardens." These were really platforms built up on tiers of arches and covered with earth. Flowers and vines and shrubs grew in these gardens, and they were considered so wonderful, that they were known as one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It is said that Nebuchadnezzar had these gardens built to look like a mountain in order to please his queen. She was a princess who had lived amongst the mountains of Media and missed the hills of her home.

But Nebuchadnezzar was followed by Belshazzar, who was a weak king. He was betrayed by traitors in the city, and Babylon was taken by Cyrus, King of Persia. The night before this happened, Belshazzar gave a great feast to the nobles of the land. At this feast the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jerusalem were brought out, and the Babylonians drank wine from them. In one of the Hebrew writings, the story is told of how a strange writing on the wall appeared as a warning to Belshazzar of what was about to happen to him. This feast was probably the last revel before the attack of the Persians and the defeat of the Babylonians, and in that night Belshazzar the King was slain, and the Persian became lord of the land.

CHAPTER V

Life in Ancient Babylon

Like all ancient cities, Babylon was surrounded by high walls. Those of Babylon were so huge that we are told a four-horse chariot could be turned round on the top. Inside the city, there were great buildings of all kinds: temples and palaces, and large and small houses, with streets and shops and gardens. The houses were generally built of brick, round a court-yard which often had a well in the centre shaded by trees. The smaller houses were of one story only, but the larger had several. The doors were narrow and high, and the few windows were near the ceiling. The rooms generally opened one into the other and the walls were covered with paintings. The royal palace was very large, for all the persons who were attached to the service of the king lived in it. Warehouses, cellars, kitchens, the king's treasury, and all kinds of official apartments required places in the palace itself, and the king alone required about twenty rooms for his private use. Then there were the queen's apartments and her gardens; royal and rich women seldom went about in the city, and the queen was only rarely seen.

There was not a great deal of furniture used in

these houses. The floor was covered with rugs or mats, and here and there were chairs, couches and tables. The chairs were so high that footstools were usually needed; cushions were used, and these and the couches and bedsteads were covered with tapestry. The tables were often inlaid with ivory, and tripods of bronze were seen everywhere as stands for vases of water or wine. Vases of all kinds, of every kind of shape, and made of every kind of material were used as ornaments.

In most ancient countries, the women were looked upon as very inferior to the men, but in Babylonia the woman was almost the equal of the man. She was allowed to hold property of her own, and when she married, if she had a large fortune of her own, she was allowed to have the management of it. If, however, she was poor, and the bridegroom provided all the money, the wife was little more than a slave. Children were well looked after, and both boys and girls were educated. For the first three years both boys and girls were entirely looked after by a nurse. The first important ceremony in a child's life was that of choosing a name. Great care had to be taken about this, for the Babylonians believed that certain names would bring good luck, whilst others would be unlucky. Names were very long, and they sometimes included the name of a god; here are some specimens: Merodach-balasu-igbi, Nergal-ina-esi-edher.

A Babylonian school consisted of several rooms. The main door led into a long room where a doorkeeper sat, who probably kept a clay tablet list of

those who arrived late. From there the children went into a court which was open to the sky, in one corner of which was a pile of soft clay, which the children might take in order to make new tablets for their writing lessons. School began early, and one of the sayings found in an old Babylonian copy-book is: "He who would excel in the school of the scribes must rise like the dawn." The first thing the pupils were taught was writing, and the cuneiform writing was very difficult, for there were so many different signs to be learnt, but the children were encouraged by being told that "He who shall excel in tablet writing shall shine like the sun." Great stress was evidently laid on good spelling, for in all the letters that have been preserved, there is very seldom a misspelled word. Reading was also taught, and history, foreign languages, law, religion, the study of omens, astrology and map-making. Boys were also taught to shoot with the bow, and to take part in other out-door exercises, so that on the whole the Babylonians were taught a greater variety of things than the Egyptians. Borsippa, a suburb of Babylon, was famous for its schools and college, and from an allusion on a clay tablet, it seems that a medical school was established there.

The dress of both men and women in Babylonia was very much alike: a tunic or shirt, made of linen or wool, and fastened with a girdle; a long robe worn over this, sometimes open in front and ornamented with a fringe (embroidered patterns and fringes were very much used and admired); some kind of felt hat; sandals; and in colder weather a heavy cloak was

worn over the rest of the clothing. All Babylonian gentlemen wore a small engraved cylinder or seal attached to the wrist by a chain, so that they could use it for their signature whenever necessary.

How did the Babylonians spend their time? They were great fighters, and war took up a good part of their time, but unlike the Assyrians, war was not their chief occupation, and they put a number of good things into the world. We owe to the Babylonians: the idea of the arch in building, the development of arithmetic, the weaving of cloth, the polishing and engraving of precious stones, the study of the stars, the making of bricks, and the idea of a sun-dial for a clock.

The deep blue Eastern sky studded with brilliant stars attracted the gaze of the wise men of Babylon, and they were the first people who made a map of the heavens. They observed twelve groups of stars, through which it seemed to them the sun passed in his journey across the sky, and they called these the Zodiac. Observing seven other great heavenly bodies in the sky, they named them for their gods, each of whom they believed, in different ways, controlled the course of events. This belief in the influence of the stars on the life of men developed into the science of astrology, which was very much studied in Babylon. Modern astronomy still maps out the sky after the old Babylonian plan, though the names of Roman gods have taken the place of those of ancient Babylonia. The Babylonians also made a calendar, in which they divided the year into twelve months of thirty days each, but like the Egyptians,

they found that a year of three hundred and sixty days did not coincide accurately with what they thought were the movements of the sun, so they adopted the plan of adding a whole month to the calendar in every six years.

In addition to the sun-dial for a clock, the Babylonians also used the "clepsydra." This word means a "water thief," and in its simplest form it was a vessel of water with a hole in the bottom, through which the water dripped regularly into another vessel placed beneath to receive it. As the level of the water in the upper vessel was lowered, the time it had taken was marked on a scale at the side. The principle of the sun-dial was to show *when* it was a certain hour; that of the clepsydra was to show *how long* a time had elapsed since a given moment. This instrument was much improved and perfected in later centuries by the Greeks, but it was the Babylonians who first put their minds to inventing some method of telling the time.

A stranger wandering through the city of Babylon would have found busy markets where buying and selling were going on, and where merchants from Egypt and all the other ancient nations were exchanging the products of their countries for things made in Babylon. The shops were all in narrow streets, and the goods for sale were set out to view under awnings, instead of in the windows as in our shops. Weavers, dyers and tanners were hard at work, and the shoes of Babylonia were famous in those days, and so were the Babylonian riding saddles. Then there were gold, silver and coppersmiths,

and the goldsmith was required to guarantee that his work was good before he gave it to his customer. One such guarantee reads as follows: "As to the gold ring set with an emerald, we guarantee that for twenty years the emerald will not fall out."[1] If it did, the goldsmith promised to pay a fine. Then, too, there were carpenters, carvers in ivory, porcelain makers, and in fact, just the same kind of craftsmen as we have today. Only there was no machinery, all these workers produced everything entirely by hand, and the articles were generally bought straight from the person who had made them.

As well as craftsmen there were men following many different professions: there were scribes, who were also authors; doctors, whose prescriptions were largely mixed up with queer superstitions; bankers and money lenders; and musicians who played a variety of instruments, drums, trumpets, lyres, harps, pipes and cymbals.

Nebuchadnezzar was the King who had made Babylon so prosperous, and he was very proud of it: "Is not this great Babylon," he said, "which I have built for the house of the kingdom, by the might of my power, and the glory of my majesty!"[2]

[1] From James Baikie: *Ancient Assyria.* [2] Daniel, iv, 30.

CHAPTER VI

The Gods of Ancient Babylon

The gods of Babylon were the same as those of Assyria, and both these nations were very superstitious, especially the Babylonian. In the most ancient times of all they had a great many different gods, but after a while, though the others were still worshipped, some became more important than the others. Marduk was the Creator, and Ea was the Spirit of the Water. The gods of the Babylonians were not the kindly gods of the Egyptians, but beings who were supposed to be always wanting to harm men. Ea was an exception. The sea brought intercourse and trade with other lands to Babylon and helped to make her rich, and so Ea was looked upon as the god who delighted in doing good to mankind, and who brought well-being to the world.

But in addition to these chief gods, the Babylonians believed in countless spirits, most of them evil, and on the watch to attack and torment men. One of the chief of these was the Spirit of the South West Wind, a fearful creature who brought disease and death and was a great terror to the popular imagination. It was said of these evil spirits that

"door cannot shut them out, nor bolt prevent them from entering; they glide like serpents beneath the door, and creep through the joints of hinges like a puff of wind." To avoid the wicked tricks of these bad spirits, the Babylonians used charms and magic. They dreaded demons in the water they drank, and in the food they ate, so charms had to be learned and recited in order to make them harmless; they thought that sickness, and especially madness was due to evil spirits, so the wise man or magician was called in at such times to drive away the disease. They poured holy water over the sick person, and they believed that the number seven had magic powers, so sometimes they bound magic threads seven times round the limbs of the afflicted person. The Babylonians were also so afraid that witches or demons might enter their houses, that they put images to the right and left of the door to scare away any such unwelcome visitors, and these images were so hideous that they would have been enough to frighten away anybody!

All Babylonians believed in the power of the stars, and astrologers, men who gave their lives to the study of the heavens, thought that they could tell the future from the stars, and also the fate and fortune of individuals. The Three Wise Men or Magi, who journeyed from the East to Jerusalem, were probably either Chaldæans or sages from the still more distant Persia, where the stars were also studied and believed to foretell events. The discovery of a new star, a comet, or an eclipse of the sun, anything strange to them and which they could

not understand, was interpreted as having a meaning in connection with some event in the world.

Of course the very superstitious practices were only common amongst the less well-educated Babylonians, the better educated had much nobler ideas about their gods. A hymn to the Moon God, written before the days of Abraham, shows what some of the most ancient people of the land believed.

Father, long-suffering and full of forgiveness,
Whose hands uphold the life of all mankind!
First-born, omnipotent, whose heart is immensity,
There is none who may fathom it.

In heaven, who is supreme?
Thou alone, Thou art supreme.
On earth, who is supreme?
Thou alone, Thou art supreme.

As for Thee, Thy will is made known in heaven,
And the angels bow their faces.
As for Thee, Thy will is made known upon earth,
And the spirits below kiss the ground. [1]

The Babylonians built temples to their gods, but they were of an entirely different form from that of the Egyptian temples. In Babylon they consisted of towers with a number of stages, each one a little smaller than the one below. Such a temple was called a Ziggurat. The Babylonians had inherited the idea of a Ziggurat from the ancient Sumerians. These people had probably lived in a mountainous

[1] Translated by A. H. Sayce.

region before settling in the plains of the Euphrates, and they thought of "high places" as the dwelling-place of the gods. So when they built their temples, high tower-like structures seemed to them to be the most fitting. The most famous Ziggurat was that in Babylon. It had seven stages, each of which was painted a different colour: black, orange, red, gold, pale yellow, deep blue and silver, and each stage was dedicated to a heavenly body: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, the Sun, Venus, Mercury and the Moon. The shrine of the god was at the top, but it contained no image, this was kept lower down. The statue was of gold, seated on a golden throne and surrounded by altars. The idea in the ancient Hebrew story of the Tower of Babel came from these Babylonian temple towers, for the Hebrews were much influenced by both the Egyptians and the Babylonians. Constant services were held in the temples, and there were many festivals. The seventh day was kept as a day of rest, and there were very strict rules as to what might be done and what was forbidden on that day. No work of any kind might be performed, and there were special rules for the king: he "must not eat flesh cooked at the fire or in the smoke; must not change his clothes; must not put on white garments; must not offer sacrifices; must not drive in his chariot or issue royal decrees." No one might give medicine to the sick on the seventh day.

A great difference between the religion of the Babylonians and that of the Egyptians was that the latter influenced the conduct of men, whereas the former touched it very little. Both religions taught that

there was a life after death, but the Egyptians believed that a good man, who had been declared just by Osiris went to heaven, where life was happy, and where the soul wandered blissfully in the Elysian Fields; the Babylonians on the other hand thought that the life they were to lead after death was gloomy and dismal. They called the place to which souls went "The Land of No Return," and there was nothing there but gloom and dreariness. The Goddess of Love once went down into this dismal land in search of one whom she loved, and the old legend which tells the tale gives this description of the land:

The house of darkness . .
The house men enter, but cannot depart from
The road men go, but cannot return.
The house from whose dwellers the light is withdrawn,
The place where dust is their food, their nourishment clay.
The light they behold not, in darkness they dwell.
They are clothed like birds, all fluttering wings.
On the door and the gate-posts the dust lieth deep. [1]

Assyria and Babylon were alike in some ways: in their manner of living, their customs and beliefs, their dress, their writing, but the roots of civilization were much stronger and more enduring in Babylon than Assyria, for Assyria originated very little herself, and as we have seen she lived only for war, and destroyed more than she built. But the history of the world is like the working out of a great pattern, in which each nation has its own thread to weave, its

[1] Translated by Sir G. A. Smith.

own particular colour to put in. Sometimes mistakes are made, and it seems as if a part of the pattern must be destroyed in order that a greater advance may be made later. Assyria was this destroying power, but in order to wage her wars, she built roads and made trade routes to and from the countries she conquered, and it was along these routes that later countries carried art and learning and civilization. Assyria herself disappeared quickly and completely, for when about two hundred years later a Greek army passed over the spot that had once been Nineveh, the Greeks never even guessed that beneath their feet was the wreck of one of the proudest cities of the ancient world.

THE HEBREWS

THE HEBREWS

CHAPTER I

The Land of Palestine

Palestine is a very little land, but little lands have been of great importance in history; for example, Palestine, Greece, England, Belgium. The Palestine of the Hebrews was situated between the lands where the great empires of Egypt and Assyria and Babylon flourished. She was the meeting-place, as it were, for travellers and traders going to and from these countries, and in consequence the civilization of these places passed through her, and she was able to learn a great deal from them. But just as in modern times, Belgium, being on one of the high roads between France and Germany has been used over and over again as a battle field by the European nations, so in ancient times, Palestine, on the high road between Egypt and Babylon was also the battle field of nations, especially in the plains in the North. The war and commerce of nearly all the ancient world passed through this little land.

The Hebrew inhabitants of Palestine were not sailors; they never used the sea as a highway, but they looked upon it as a boundary, as something that

cut them off from other peoples. There were some good harbours in the North, but these did not belong to the Hebrews.

The climate of Palestine is very varied. The top of Mount Hermon is covered with snow, but in the valley of the Jordan, not so very far away, there are tropical plants. In ancient times there was more forest land than now, and there were more olives. In those days there were terraces "clad with vines." There are two clearly marked seasons in Palestine, the rainy and the dry. The rains fall from October to April, and then from May to October the land is dry. Spring is a most beautiful time, for in few other lands are there more wild flowers. The Hebrews called this time the "coming of flowers," and one of their poets wrote of the spring:

> Lo, the winter is past,
> The rain is over and gone;
> The flowers appear on the earth;
> The time of the singing of birds is come,
> And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
> The fig tree ripeneth her green figs,
> And the vines are in blossom,
> They give forth their fragrance.

The Hebrew people who came to this land and lived in it, came originally from beyond the Euphrates, and the name "Hebrew" means "a dweller on the other side." The Hebrews called themselves the "Sons of Israel," taking their name from one of their ancestors. It is the story of these people that we read about in the Bible.

CHAPTER II

The Bible

The world owes a great deal to the ancient Egyptians and to the Babylonians, but it owes still more to the Hebrews, for it was they who taught the world the knowledge of God. Politically the Hebrews were of little account in the world, but in the story of how man in learning how to live, has sought to satisfy the searching of his spirit, they stand supreme.

The Bible is the book in which the Hebrews have written their history. The word "Bible" is a Greek word meaning "book," though the word "book" is a wrong one to use, as the Bible is made up of a great many different books, written by many different writers over a long period of years. At one time it was called the "Divine Library," which is really a much more accurate name. For convenience' sake, these books have been bound together in one volume, but doing this has made it difficult to remember how many different kinds of writings there are in it. When the Hebrews wrote it, they had paragraphs, made their poetry different from their prose, and kept the separate books apart. There were no chapters and verses, these were arranged much later in

order to make it easier to find the various passages wanted. In the Bible there are legends and history, law, poetry, religious teaching, in fact the whole literature of the Hebrew people. The history is written in an especially interesting way, for the writers have put it in a dramatic form, that is, they have made the people about whom they are telling us, do their own talking, as they would in a play, and like all Eastern peoples they use a language full of poetry and imagination.

The Hebrew people were always looking forward to the coming of a period of better conditions in the world, and their writings are very interesting records of progress, from ignorance to fuller knowledge, and from lower to higher ideals. Religion held the most important place in their lives, and the history of the Hebrew people is chiefly the history of how they learned to know the character of God. He was known to them by the Hebrew name Jehovah, and in the beginning they thought of Him as a stern master whose anger had to be appeased. Later He was to them the Lord of Hosts, Who fought for them as their Leader in war. At this time they believed that other nations had their own gods, but they were different from Jehovah, for these gods were not regarded, even by those who believed in them, as entirely free from human frailties, whereas Jehovah was a God of absolute righteousness and justice. As the centuries went by, the Hebrews learned that their early conceptions of Jehovah were inadequate, and that He was the One God of the whole world. Through their experiences they learned to know His

character and what allegiance to Him meant. They learned that:

Jehovah hath showed thee, O man, what is good;
And what doth He require of thee,
But to do justly,
And to love mercy,
And to walk humbly with thy God?[1]

[1] Micah, vi, 8.

CHAPTER III

The Patriarchs

I. THE PATRIARCHS IN CANAAN

The Hebrews were originally a shepherd people, who lived in the land near the banks of the Euphrates. The patriarch Abraham, a rich man, owning flocks and herds, received a call that he recognized as coming from Jehovah to leave his home and friends and kindred, and to travel west to a new home in the land then known as Canaan. With the call was a promise that he should become the father of a great nation, and that his descendants should possess the land to which he was to journey. It was not an unknown thing for such men to seek new homes, where perhaps the pasture would be better, or the springs of water more conveniently situated. But Abraham was to go a much further distance than such journeys generally took men, and he must have been very full of a spirit of adventure and of sure faith in the outcome to have started. He and his caravan reached the land in safety, and not long afterwards his son, Isaac, was born.

When Isaac was still only a lad, the idea came to Abraham that he must offer him to Jehovah as a

sacrifice. It was a very early belief amongst all Eastern nations that to offer one's dearest possessions, and even those persons whom one loved best as a sacrifice to God, was something especially well-pleasing to Him. But as Abraham held the knife over his son, ready to kill him, there came to him the understanding that there were other and better ways of showing one's devotion to Jehovah than by taking human life, and that the ram he found in a near-by thicket was a more suitable sacrifice.

When Isaac had grown to be a man, in accordance with the custom of the East, Abraham chose a wife for him. He sent one of his most trusted servants to Mesopotamia, to find a wife from amongst his own people. Laden with rich gifts, the servant went back to the old home of his master, and there he met the grand-daughter of his master's brother, who treated him with all the graciousness of eastern hospitality. He told his tale, and Rebekah consented to return with him and become the bride of Isaac.

Isaac was mild and peace-loving, and his life lacked the adventure of that of his father; he and Rebekah lived the quiet, uneventful lives of rich herdsmen. They had two sons, Jacob and Esau. Esau was a hunter, he loved the open air, but he had no great ambitions for himself or his family; he lived in the present and was content with the satisfaction of his bodily needs. He was impulsive, but he had no imagination.

Jacob was just the opposite. He had many faults: he was selfish and jealous, and he was willing to stoop to mean tricks to gain his ends, and he took

the blessing of his father which was intended for Esau by deception. But he had imagination, he could dream dreams and see visions, and he had a passionate desire that the hopes of Abraham for his race should come true, and his faith in these hopes never left him.

II. THE STORY OF JOSEPH

Jacob had twelve sons, of whom Joseph and Benjamin, the two youngest, were the sons of his favourite wife, Rachel. Because of this, and because they were the sons of his old age, he loved them more than the others, and Joseph in particular he spoiled. He dressed him in the long-sleeved tunic which was worn only by men who had no hard work to do, whilst his brothers were sent out to take care of the flocks. All this made his brothers hate him, and the Hebrew tradition relates that one day when he had come out to see them in the fields, in their desire to be rid of him, they sold him as a slave to some merchants who happened to be passing on their way to Egypt. Through his ability, Joseph rose to be an important official of the Pharaoh, and when a famine brought his brothers to Egypt, he dramatically revealed himself to them as the brother whom they had hated and despised. All this can be read in the book of Genesis, told by the Hebrew story-teller, and there are few, if any, better story-tellers than the Hebrews in the world.

This made a great sensation in Egypt; the Pharaoh heard of it and invited the aged Jacob to come with

his family and make his home in Egypt until the famine should be over. They came, and were given the land of Goshen, where they lived with their flocks and herds until the death of Jacob. His sons took his body back to the land of Canaan for burial, but returned to Egypt which they seem to have looked upon as their home.

As long as Joseph and the Pharaoh who had honoured him were alive, all went well, but after their death the lot of the Hebrews became a very hard one. The Egyptians disliked foreigners and looked down on the occupation of shepherds, which they considered only fit for slaves; and so in time, the Hebrews actually became the slaves of the Egyptians, who treated them very harshly. It was then that Moses appeared, who was to be their deliverer from Egypt.

CHAPTER IV

Moses and the Exodus from Egypt

The Pharaoh who "knew not Joseph" was probably Ramses II, and he employed the Hebrews in work on his great buildings. They had been increasing in numbers and he was afraid of their growing power, so he issued a decree that all their baby boys were to be killed. One woman, however, saved her son by hiding him in a bulrush cradle by the river bank, where she hoped that no one would find him. But the Pharaoh's daughter coming down to the river with her maidens, found the little cradle with the Hebrew baby in it, and she took the child back with her to the palace and adopted him. She called him "Moses," a name which means "taken from the water"; in this way it came about that Moses was brought up in the palace of the Pharaoh, where he learned all that an Egyptian prince would have been taught.

As he grew up, Moses used to visit the Hebrew slaves, and he was much interested in all that concerned them. One day his sense of justice and anger were aroused at seeing one of the Egyptian overseers beating a Hebrew, and in impetuous haste he killed the Egyptian. In the eyes of the law this was a great

crime, and Moses was obliged to flee from the palace, as otherwise his life would probably have been in danger. Up to this time Moses had been living as an Egyptian, but this act put him definitely on the side of the Hebrew slaves, and now, out in the desert, whither he had fled, he was able to think quietly over the condition of his kinsmen, and there grew up in his mind the resolve to free them from their oppressors, and to lead them back to the land which had been promised to their ancestor Abraham.

Moses, accompanied by his brother Aaron, returned to the city and entering the presence of the Pharaoh demanded the release of the Hebrews, but their petition was refused. Egypt was always subject to certain pestilences, and the country was evidently visited by some at this time; the Hebrew writer described them in great detail and attributed them all to the refusal of the Pharaoh to let the Hebrew slaves, who were very useful to him, leave the land. These calamities were known as the Ten Plagues, and finally, after the last, the Pharaoh consented to let the Hebrews go. But as soon as he heard that they were really gone, he repented and pursued after them. He arrived too late, however, for, overtaking them by the shore of the Red Sea, the east wind (which had blown with so much strength that the shallow waters of the sea were forced back, leaving a passage free by which the fugitives could escape) changed, and as the Egyptians with their heavy chariots were attempting to cross by the same passage, they were drowned.

This was a tremendous moment in the history of

the Hebrews. Behind them lay Egypt, with its fertile land, its broad river which served as a highway for the nations who traded with Egypt and added to her wealth, its busy cities, its learning,—and slavery. Before them was the desert, silent, desolate, bare, apparently uninhabited,—and freedom. Behind them was the land where mind and spirit were bound by tradition, before them lay the silent places, but where was to be found freedom for mind and spirit.

The Hebrews were now able to continue their way secure against further attempts on the part of the Egyptians to pursue them. There were some thousands of them (we do not know the exact number), and they travelled as caravans still travel across the desert. A leader generally goes in front carrying a long pole on the top of which is a brazier filled with smoking coals. During the day the smoke can be seen at a great distance, so that the caravan can tell where the leader is and the direction in which it must travel. At night the glowing coals in the brazier serve the same purpose, and make it possible for travellers to take long night journeys over the desert in order to reach the oases without undue delay. Long years afterwards, when the history of this escape from Egypt was being written, it all seemed so miraculous to the Hebrew writer, that he described the journey over the trackless desert as guided by "the Lord who went before them, by day in a pillar of a cloud to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."

CHAPTER V

The Making of the Hebrew Nation

I. LIFE IN THE WILDERNESS

Safe from pursuit, the Hebrews journeyed towards Sinai, a rocky peninsula, which is probably the only place in the world that has seen men come and go and yet remained unchanged itself since the beginning of history. It is a very awe-inspiring place, stern, bare and silent. A great encampment was made in the peninsula, and Moses went up to the top of a mountain, where he remained forty days, communing with Jehovah and receiving inspiration for the writing of the Law.

The chief part of this Law is contained in what is known as the "Ten Commandments." These are laws which taught the people first, the duties they owed to Jehovah, and secondly, the duties they owed to each other. Up to this time the Hebrews had lived as disorganzied tribes, but from now onwards they began to have a dim idea of what it meant to be a nation. These laws were written on two stone tablets, probably in much the same manner as that in which the Babylonians made their records. When Moses came down from the mountain, he found the

people worshipping a golden calf they had made in his absence, and in his anger he threw down the tablets and they were broken. Later, however, the Law was written out again, and these second tablets were kept in the Ark, a chest specially made for them. The idea of both the golden calf and of the Ark show the influence of Egypt on the Hebrews. Moses, like all great leaders, could see beyond the present, and he could disentangle and explain the difficulties of the moment by the light of the vision he had before him, so when he saw the golden calf, he was right to be angry, for idolatry was one of the things that had to be stamped out. But the Hebrews, undisciplined and unable to look after themselves as they were, when they found themselves without their leader, in strange and unfamiliar surroundings, made an image of that which in Egypt had been held so sacred, the bull that represented the Nile. Moses seemed to have deserted them, and in their ignorance of the true nature of Jehovah and their need for some visible leader, they fell back upon the familiar Egyptian image. The Ark, too, was of Egyptian origin, for in Egypt, the Sun-God had his sacred boat in which he was taken by the priests on the days of the great processions. The Hebrew Ark was not made in the form of a ship, but of a chest, but the idea was the same, it was the means by which that which was sacred could be reverently carried about.

Soon after leaving Mount Sinai, twelve men were sent into Canaan to spy out the land. They brought back a good account of its fertile valleys, but they also reported that the cities were strongly fortified

and that the conquest of the land seemed an impossibility. The result was that forty years went by before the Hebrews made any attempt to take possession of the country. The inhabitants of Canaan were highly civilized compared to the Hebrews, and there was much for the latter to learn before they could undertake such a task. They were really only desert tribes; they called themselves the "Twelve Tribes of Israel," each of which bore the name of one of the sons of Jacob. They knew nothing about attacking, far less taking walled towns; the need for looking after their herds and flocks made sieges practically impossible for them, and their military knowledge was of a very elementary kind; they were only foot-soldiers, whereas the Canaanites had chariots of iron; so that a long period of training in the desert was necessary before they could become a fighting force to be reckoned with. Moses gave them this training during their long forty years' sojourn in the desert.

During these years the Hebrew people lived in the open air, exposed to all kinds of weather, and they were continually changing their place of encampment in the ceaseless search over the desert for springs of water. Their food was coarse and scanty, and the lack of water was a constant difficulty, making them long for the green hills and rich pasture lands flowing with milk and honey, they hoped to find in Palestine. Besides the danger of not always finding enough to eat, there was added the danger that at any moment they might be attacked by the fierce nomad tribes of the desert.

The discipline of this life gave the Hebrews the

training they needed, and they also grew accustomed to live together as an organized body of people, until at last the time came when they were ready to enter the land of Canaan with every likelihood of being victorious.

But Moses did not live to go with them into the Promised Land. Tradition says that he had a view of the land from the top of a mountain and that he died there, but no one knew where his grave was. An old legend still survives among the modern Arab inhabitants of this region, that a certain moaning of the wind, heard there from time to time, is the sighing of Moses in sorrow that he must leave his people and the mountains he loved so well.

After the death of Moses, the command of the Hebrews was given to Joshua, who had already shown his ability as a military leader, and under him they advanced into Canaan.

II. THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN

The Hebrews first crossed the Jordan and then advanced to the city of Jericho, which they besieged and captured. They then advanced further into the country, until most of the land had been conquered, when Joshua divided it amongst the twelve tribes, giving to each a definite portion of land.

This conquest took some time and it was not a peaceful one, but was accompanied by fearful massacres of the Canaanites and the complete destruction of their cities. The Hebrews looked upon these wars as religious wars, they were not only taking posses-

sion of the land promised to them, but they were showing to the world, that in that land they would tolerate no belief in any god but Jehovah. Later Hebrew writers regretted the cruelty with which these wars were accompanied, but the standards of those early days demanded that evil should be conquered by violence, and the people believed that Jehovah was pleased that His enemies should be completely exterminated.

The conquest and settlement of Canaan was the first great change in the history of the Hebrew people, for from being shepherd tribes, living in their tents and wandering from place to place in search of food and water for themselves and their flocks, they became a settled people with fixed homes; they became husbandmen as well as herdsmen. They never completely drove out the Canaanites, from whom they learnt many things. Town life developed and the old simplicity began to disappear. More and more the Hebrews grew to consider themselves as a nation rather than as groups of separate tribes and this gradually led to a change in their attitude towards Jehovah. Up to this time they had had no king. The Canaanites who were still in the land made constant war on them and when these crises arose, local leaders called Judges appeared who took command, and by their courage and daring delivered the people from their foes. But Jehovah the Lord of Hosts was their King. Under pressure, however, from constant attack from the Philistines, who occupied the strip of coast land in the south western portion of Canaan, they began to realize that in order

to preserve their much threatened independence they should be united at all times under one leader and so they demanded a King, like the nations that surrounded them. They naturally turned for advice to Samuel, the aged Judge at that time, a man much revered for his wisdom, and at first he tried to dissuade them from changing their old tribal form of government, which he feared would shake their loyalty to Jehovah, but he finally agreed to find a man who should have the qualities necessary to make a good king, and his choice fell upon one called Saul. Samuel anointed him with oil (according to the old traditions in the East, anointing with oil always meant being set apart for some definite task), and in the presence of a great assembly of the people, Saul was recognized as King of Israel.

CHAPTER VI

The United Kingdom of Israel

I. SAUL

Saul was the first King of Israel, and he began his reign well. He led his armies against the enemies who were attacking the country, and he came back victorious from all his wars. All seemed to be going well, when the King became ill. He was said to be tormented by an evil spirit, the ancient way of describing any disease of the mind. This disease would attack the King suddenly; at times it would plunge him into gloomy melancholy and at others it would excite his mind with unreasonable and malicious rage. It was thought that perhaps music would soothe him, and David, a young shepherd from Bethlehem, known as a skilful harpist and sweet singer, was sent for. He came to Saul, and his music restored the King to health, and Saul loved him and made him one of his armour-bearers. David quickly became very popular; he was young, good-looking, strong and a brave soldier, he also had great skill both as a musician and poet, and his winning manner made him friends everywhere. But Saul's affection for him turned to jealousy. David slew the giant Goliath,

who had challenged the Israelite army to send out a champion to fight him. The people welcomed back the young hero with enthusiasm, and gave praise even greater than they had ever given Saul himself.

> Saul hath slain his thousands,
> And David his ten thousands,

was their welcoming song, and Saul's mind, still weak from his illness, became so overclouded with jealousy that his madness returned. His old affection for David turned to hate, and he tried to kill him several times. Saul had also another cause for his jealousy. He had not lived up to his good beginning as King, and Samuel had told him that his son should not reign after him, and David had been anointed to take his place. David, however, never attempted to take the throne during Saul's lifetime, neither did he ever give the King grounds for fearing that he would make such an attempt.

Saul had a son, Jonathan, and he and David were close friends, such friends, that the names of "David and Jonathan" are still used to describe a great friendship between two people. Jonathan knew that his father wanted to kill David, and he arranged for his friend's escape. For a long time David lived in exile. Sometimes Saul actually pursued him, for he feared that the popularity of David might make the people proclaim him king. But in spite of all Saul's unkindness to him, David still loved him, and though he twice had Saul in his power and might have killed him (as any other man of his time undoubtedly would

have done), David spared him, and when at last Saul and Jonathan were killed in battle against the Philistines, David sorrowed greatly and lamented for them, saying:

Thy glory, O Israel
Is slain upon thy high places.
How are the mighty
Fallen!

From the blood of the slain,
From the fat of the mighty,
The bow of Jonathan turned not back,
And the sword of Saul returned not empty.

Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives
And in their death they were not divided;
They were swifter than eagles,
They were stronger than lions.

How are the mighty
Fallen in the midst of the battle!
O Jonathan,
Slain upon thy high places.

I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan.
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me;
Thy love to me was wonderful,
Passing the love of women.

How are the mighty
Fallen!
And the weapons of war
Perished![1]

[1] II Samuel, i, 19–27.

Saul accomplished a great deal for the Hebrews. Under his leadership they were definitely united into a nation. His great ability as a general taught them much about warfare and he proved to them that they were powerful enough to resist their enemies, and though small, to be counted amongst the nations of the world. The two kings who followed Saul were both greater than he, but Saul successfully laid the foundations of a Hebrew kingdom upon which they were able to build.

II. DAVID

David was now acknowledged King of Israel. He had passed unharmed through many perils, temptations and difficulties, and his fame as a warrior together with his courage and chivalry and personal charm made him recognized as a leader of men, and the fittest person to be king. There were still, however, some who wanted one of Saul's sons to be king, and David was not allowed to take his kingdom without opposition. All the first part of his reign had to be given to making the kingdom sure for himself, and the country secure from foreign foes. But he succeeded, and he conquered Jerusalem, a strong city up in the hills, and made it the capital of his kingdom. In order to make its importance as the principal city more sure, he brought the Ark, which had hitherto been kept at Shiloh, to Jerusalem, where it was kept in a tent specially prepared for it.

At Jerusalem, David held his court, and gathered round him a devoted band of warriors. One of his

chief characteristics was the power he had of inspiring loyalty and affection in his friends. But as David grew older, troubles arose in his family, and Absalom, one of his best-loved sons, rebelled against him, trying to make himself king. David had to flee from Jerusalem, and though in the end the rebellion was put down, contrary to David's express command, Absalom was slain. This news nearly broke the heart of the old King. He loved his son so well that he would have given his life for him: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"

David was now growing old, and it was necessary that he should make some choice as to his successor. He was only the second king to reign over all Israel, and the custom that a son should succeed his father was not yet firmly established. The people still went back to the old method by which the dying chief named the man he wished to succeed him. This custom was observed in the time of David, who named his son Solomon as his successor.

David had all the qualities which make a leader of men. He was brave, chivalrous and generous. He loved his friends and inspired them with passionate devotion to himself. He was a far-famed warrior and at the same time a poet and a musician. His character showed at its best in times of difficulty and danger; in prosperity and success he was sometimes weak in controlling his own desires and as a father he was too indulgent and spoilt his children. But Israel owed great things to David. He built well on the foundations Saul had laid, and at his death the Kingdom of

Israel was in such a prosperous condition, that his son could devote his whole time to the occupations of peace without fear of invasion or of hostile attacks from neighbouring countries.

The deeds of David were sung throughout the succeeding centuries, and the Hebrews always looked back to him as their ideal King, their great national hero, one who was "a man after God's own heart."

III. SOLOMON

David was succeeded by his son Solomon, who found himself ruler over a strong kingdom, secure from outside aggression and prosperous at home. He was only twenty years of age, and he began his reign with the highest ideals and with a prayer to Jehovah that he might have an "understanding heart to judge the people."

Solomon first organized his kingdom and arranged his court, not on the simple lines which had contented Saul and David, but more like that of other eastern kings of his time, which meant great splendour, magnificence and luxury. He then made friends with other countries; he married an Egyptian princess, and made a trade alliance with the Phœnician King, Hiram of Tyre. He traded with many other countries, getting horses and chariots from Egypt, cedar-wood from Lebanon, and gold, spices, sandal-wood, apes, peacocks and ivory from the East. Though the Hebrews never became great sailors, Solomon built a navy which carried the trade of Israel to distant shores, according to tradition, even as far as India.

Solomon was next a great builder. David had wished to build a Temple in which to keep the Ark, but he had not been able to do more than collect materials, and it was Solomon who actually erected it. He chose as the site a piece of hilly ground in Jerusalem and the general plan was in many ways similar to that of an Egyptian Temple. Wealth, labour and time were lavished on the Temple in order that it might be worthy of Jehovah. Through a porch one passed into the main body of the building, called the Holy Place, out of which opened an inner chamber known as the Holy of Holies. Two huge golden cherubim stood in this sanctuary; their wings were outstretched and the Ark was placed between them. Only the High Priest might enter there, and he only once a year.

Solomon also built a palace for himself, near the Temple, but a little lower down the hill. It contained a hall, known as the House of the Forest of Lebanon, because of its forty-five large pillars made of cedar from Lebanon, a throne room, and the private apartments of the King and the Queen. But Solomon's buildings did not stop with those at Jerusalem. He also built a chain of fortresses which guarded the frontiers of the kingdom, and he strengthened the defences of a number of towns.

The fame of Solomon spread far and wide and brought him many visitors. One of them was the Queen of Sheba, who was so amazed at the splendour she saw, that she said the half had not been told her. But all these enterprises required money and large numbers of workmen. To obtain these Solomon was

obliged to tax the people very heavily, and to force men to work for him. This caused great discontent in the country, but his love of luxury and magnificence shut his eyes to the feeling in the land and made him more and more of a tyrant. As far as his resources permitted, he tried to imitate the splendours of the Egyptian and Babylonian courts, and little by little he lost the affection and loyalty of his subjects, and at his death, the country was in such a state of discontent that his son found open rebellion awaiting him.

CHAPTER VII

The Divided Kingdom

I. THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL

It was the Hebrew custom that a King could not consider himself firmly established on the throne, until he had been acknowledged king by his subjects. It was not sufficient that he should be the son or the choice of the former king, he must also be the choice of the people. Solomon was followed by his son Rehoboam, but before the tribes in the north would recognize him as King, they asked him to promise that he would change his father's policy of heavy taxation and forced labour. If he would do this, they assured him of their loyal support. The old and experienced men in the country, men who had known and loved his grandfather David, advised the young king to listen to these requests and to grant them. But Rehoboam, who knew nothing of the real conditions in the country, and would not have cared much if he had known them, turned away from these wise counsellors, and listened instead to the foolish advice of the young men who had grown up with him, and he not only absolutely refused to lighten any of the burdens his father had laid on the people, but he

declared his intention of making them yet heavier if he thought fit. The result of this stupid answer was a rebellion against him in the North. The rebellion was successful, and the northern tribes separated from the southern and made themselves into an independent kingdom, known as the Kingdom of Israel, and the leader of the rebellion became the first King.

This division of the kingdom was a very important event in Hebrew history. It practically wrecked the work of Saul and David, for instead of one strong little kingdom, there were now two weaker ones, constantly defending their land from foreign foes, and often fighting each other, until at last they fell before the might of Assyria and Babylon and ceased to exist as independent nations.

The northern kingdom was more prosperous than the southern. Samaria was the capital and under some capable kings it became a flourishing city. Trade increased with Damascus and over the great roads to Egypt. Towns grew larger, and better houses were built, but it was the rich who prospered, and their prosperity was gained at the expense of the poor, who laboured and paid heavy taxes that the rich might live in luxury. Intercourse with neighbouring countries brought an introduction of the worship of false gods into Israel, and all kinds of idolatry were practised by the people.

This period of prosperity was followed by a series of revolutions which so weakened the country, that when an Assyrian army swept down upon it, Samaria was taken and the people carried off into exile.

II. THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH

When the northern tribes rebelled and established the Kingdom of Israel, Rehoboam was left as King of Judah, with Jerusalem as his capital. The Kingdom of Judah was never as prosperous as that of Israel. It was a more hilly land and not so easily accessible, the inhabitants were shepherds rather than traders, and Jerusalem was the only large town.

The times were very bloodthirsty, and there was little peace in the land. The foreign power that was a constant menace to both kingdoms was Assyria. During the reign of Hezekiah, Sennacherib, King of Assyria, invaded Judah. He burnt the fields and captured several small towns and would doubtless have besieged Jerusalem, but Hezekiah bought him off by sending him tribute of gold. He was obliged to strip the Temple of much of its ornament in order to do this, but it saved Jerusalem. It was only for a time, however, for soon after Sennacherib came again, and this time he besieged Jerusalem. But the Assyrians did not remain long in the land, and they left the country without continuing the war. The Hebrew historian tells us that "the angel of the Lord smote them," and we have also the traditional account of what happened told in more detail by the Greek historian Herodotus. He tells us "that there came in the night a multitude of field mice, which devoured all the quivers and bowstrings of the enemy and all the thongs by which they managed their shields. Next morning they commenced their flight,

and great multitudes fell, as they had no arms with which to defend themselves."

The history of Judah then became the story of a struggle on the part of the nation to keep its national existence. Assyria and Babylon on one side, and Egypt on the other were all eager to possess it, and the people were sore beset. Sometimes they would have been willing to make an alliance with the foreign power, but the prophet-statesmen always opposed such a policy, and warned them of what would be the consequences: they would lose their freedom and their national traditions. They also feared the influence of the foreign worship of false gods on the Hebrews. Contact with other nations had already caused the purity of the ancient Hebrew worship to become very mixed up with the beliefs of the Egyptians and the Phœnicians, especially with the latter. Commerce had increased and the occupations of the people were changing. There were fewer shepherds and the old hardy simplicity had disappeared. Luxury and soft living had so weakened the character of the people, that a time came when the Syrians were able to send armies without much opposition into the heart of the country, and once Jerusalem was actually sacked by the Egyptians.

After a brief period of prosperity, the Kingdom of Judah grew steadily weaker, until Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon, invaded the land, besieged Jerusalem, captured it, burnt the city, the palaces and the Temple, broke down the walls, carried off the gold and silver treasures from the Temple and the King's palace, and took nearly all the people as captives to Babylon.

CHAPTER VIII

The Hebrew Prophets

The first great change in the history of the Hebrews took place after their conquest of Canaan, when from being nomad tribes they became a settled agricultural people. The second change took place when their town life developed, and when to the life of the husbandmen they added that of the merchant and trader. This town life was more fully developed in the northern kingdom of Israel, but Judah also came under its influence. During this period there were a number of great teachers of the people, who were known as Prophets.

The name "prophet" is usually only given now to one who foretells the future, but the title as it was given to the Hebrew prophets means a great deal more than this. The real meaning of the word "prophet," is "one who speaks on behalf of another," and the Hebrew prophets spoke to the people on behalf of Jehovah. They made known to them the will and character of Jehovah; they explained as far as they understood, what the various events of their history meant, and what the nation might expect as a result; they gave them their religious teaching; they pointed out their dangers, and warned them

against forgetting Jehovah and giving way to idolatry like the nations round them. As the Hebrews grew in wealth and developed a higher civilization, the temptations beset them that beset all wealthy and civilized communities: the rich wanted to grow richer, and so the poor were oppressed; money was spent on self-gratification instead of for the good of the whole community.

The early simple relationship of the Hebrews to Jehovah had now disappeared, and they no longer thought of Him as their God who took a close personal interest in their affairs. They worshipped Him with great ceremonies in the Temple, but He was far away from them, they did not *know* Him. Their strength was in their prosperity, not in their religion. One of their wise men once said; "Where there is no vision the people perish," and it was at a time when they were in danger of perishing for lack of a vision that the great Hebrew prophets arose, who placed one before them. We know very little about the lives of the prophets themselves, for in the records that have been left us, the work and service of a prophet for the people have been considered of greater importance than the life of the man himself. But their personality shines through their words, and though we may know but little of the events of their lives we have a clear picture of their character.

The prophets were great patriots as well as great religious teachers, and they took a very important part in the life of the nation. Their eyes were on the future, and they awoke in the people a desire for better conditions than those of their very troubled

present. They set up ideals of righteousness and justice not only for Israel but for the world, but they were not dreamers of idle dreams, they were practical men, well-informed as to the conditions of their day, but they believed that such things as those they preached were possible, and part of their work was to make the people share their belief, for unfaltering faith in the ultimate triumph of an idea is a great factor in bringing about its fulfilment.

The forerunner of the great prophets was Elijah. Nothing is known of his early life. He appeared from the desert, dressed in the rough mantle of a shepherd and carrying a shepherd's staff. He lived during the reign of King Ahab of Israel who had married a Phœnician princess, and they were introducing into Israel the worship of the Phœnician god Baal. Suddenly Elijah appeared in their midst, denouncing their idolatry. He was a very striking figure, and his early life in the desert had taught him to bear hardships easily, and had accustomed him to take long journeys on foot, and he used to appear and disappear and then appear again before the King and the people with unexpected and startling rapidity, which makes his story very dramatic. Elijah was very stern and uncompromising. To him, as to Moses, Jehovah was the God of the Hebrews, and every inclination to idolatry was to be stamped out, but he had no objection to other nations worshipping other gods, so long as Israel remained faithful. To him, Jehovah was the Lord of Hosts, Who would punish all wickedness, but Who would save Israel and triumph over the gods of the heathen.

We know very little of what Elijah did between his sudden appearances: once he was hiding from the angry King by a brook, and ravens brought him food; another time he visited a poor widow who shared her scanty fare with him; then he had a great contest on Mount Carmel with the prophets of Baal, but his victory over them so angered the Queen that he had to hide again, and lonely and discouraged he wished that he might die. As he hid in a cave, a great and strong wind arose that rent the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces, and the earth trembled beneath an earthquake and fire, and then there was silence, and in the silence Elijah heard God speaking to him, in a still, small voice as it were, encouraging him, and telling him what to do next. And again and yet again, he denounced the idolatry of the King, and then, as he had appeared, so he disappeared, suddenly, taken up to heaven according to the old tradition, by a whirlwind in a chariot of fire, with horses of fire.

Amos, the first of the prophets whose writings we have, lived more than a hundred years after Elijah He was a herdsman, and his early life was a simple one, spent away from cities. The life of a shepherd in Palestine was not an easy one; he had to be very brave and prompt in action, for he often had to face wild beasts, and he had to be ready to protect his flock by day and by night. David gave King Saul an idea of some of the perils a shepherd had to face; "Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: and I went out after him and smote him and delivered

it out of his mouth." Amos must have travelled about a good deal, probably in order to sell his wool, for he seems to have known all about the conditions in different parts of the country. Like Elijah, he appeared suddenly before the people, the first time at a great public festival. He would stay in public for a little, deliver his message, and then vanish.

The vision of Amos was the widest that the Hebrews had yet had placed before them, for he broke away from the old idea that Jehovah was the God of one nation only, and he taught that He was the God of the whole earth. He recited a great deal of their early history to the people, and entreated them to give up their idolatry, and their injustice and oppression of the poor, and he put two new ideas before them: that good acts were better than elaborate ceremonies, and that privileges given to people meant opportunities of service and responsibility for using them. This teaching went a great deal further than the harsh laws Moses had been obliged to make for the ignorant and undisciplined people he had in his care, but the work of the earlier teachers and prophets had been to impress upon Israel that Jehovah was their *God:* the work of Amos and of those who came after him was to make known the *character* of Jehovah and what He required from those who believed in Him.

The greatest of all the Hebrew prophets was Isaiah, who lived not long after Amos. He was a reformer and a statesman as well as a prophet. Little is known of his life, but his teaching has been kept for us in the great book that bears his name, though he

did not write the latter part of it. Isaiah lived in Jerusalem, and it was a very stirring time in the history of Judah. Assyria was at the height of her power and had just captured Damascus and invaded the northern kingdom of Israel. The King of Judah saw the advancing Assyrian army with terror, and Jerusalem gave way to panic. The inhabitants feasted and revelled, "Let us eat, drink and be merry," they said, "for to-morrow we die." Then it was that Isaiah pleaded with them to leave off this mad riot, and he calmed them and restored some confidence and tranquillity. It was at this time that the King bought off the Assyrian with the gold from the Temple. He came again later, but in the meantime the wise counsels of the prophet-statesman had prevailed, and when he returned, the Assyrian King found a city prepared to resist him.

But Isaiah did not confine his attention to the political affairs of his people, he vigorously attacked the crimes they were committing of oppression and injustice, and he denounced their luxury and their forgetfulness of Jehovah in such a way that he gained great influence. Jerusalem was the centre of the prophet's life, and in the pages of his book we can read descriptions of the city, how she bore herself in her days of triumph, and how she endured famine and siege, loss and defeat. He tells us of all the rumours that filled her streets on the approach of the enemy. It is a vivid picture of life at a stirring period in the history of a city. He became the trusted friend and adviser of the King, and for forty years Isaiah was in the closest touch with all that concerned the national

life and honour. He was a great patriot but there was nothing narrow in his patriotism. He knew that Judah must one day be destroyed by a foreign invader, but he believed that a remnant would be saved, and he desired for his race that this remnant might be guided by the highest ideals to take its part in service to the world.

Isaiah was a man who had vision, he could see in his imagination what lay beyond the present, he knew what standards of uprightness and honour, of goodness and righteousness people might reach if they would only really want to follow those ideals and would believe that it was possible for them to do so, and this made him very discontented with all that was poor and petty and mean. Isaiah showed Jehovah to the people as a King of Righteousness, and he has left us pictures in splendid language of what he believed the world would one day become, when, he said, "the earth should be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

The vision of the prophet-statesman had been a true one, and though it came about long after his death, Jerusalem was besieged and taken by the King of Babylon. Some of the Hebrews whom he took as captives were sent to Egypt, and with them there went a man who had been preaching to them for a long time. His name was Jeremiah, and he was a lonely man, and had made for himself many enemies. That had made him not only sad, but sometimes very bitter, for he was a man of a very sensitive nature; he had neither the energy of Elijah, nor the calm steadfastness of Isaiah. He was often weary and

depressed and sick at heart. Few nations have loved their country with a fiercer or more intense love than the Hebrews, and Jeremiah lived at a time of great humiliation for his country. These experiences, however, taught him yet another conception of Jehovah which he gave to his people. Jerusalem and the Temple had been destroyed, but Jehovah did not depend for worship on temples made with hands. Out of the suffering and humiliation which came from the exile of his people Jeremiah learned that as Jehovah was a Spirit, so every soul of man might be His temple, where He could be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

CHAPTER IX

From the Captivity to the Destruction of Jerusalem

The carrying away of the Hebrews to Babylon is always spoken of in history as the "Captivity," and it was a sad and sorrowful time for them. They constantly thought of their own land laid waste by the enemy, and in one of the Psalms written at this time, they lament their unhappy state:

By the waters of Babylon,
There we sat down, yea, we wept,
When we remembered Zion.
Upon the willows in the midst thereof
We hanged up our harps,
For there they that led us captive required of us songs,
And our tormentors required of us mirth, saying,
Sing us one of the songs of Zion.
How shall we sing the Lord's song
In a strange land?

But on the whole the Hebrews do not seem to have been badly treated in Babylon. They "built houses and planted gardens," and life was bearable. The land was described by a Hebrew writer of the time as "a land of traffic, a city of merchants, a fruitful soil,

and beside many waters." As long as they paid the tax demanded by the King, and kept the law, they were allowed to rule their own community, and were like a little Jewish kingdom in the midst of Babylon. One of the captives, Daniel, even rose to a high position in the kingdom.

The Hebrews learned a great deal from the Babylonians, especially in the way of trading methods, and banking, and they gradually gave up their old agricultural ways. They also learned the importance of keeping better written records. Some of the exiles had been sent to Egypt, and both there and in Babylon they saw how records were kept everywhere, on the temple walls and on obelisks, on clay tablets and on papyrus rolls. From this time onwards they began to be much more systematic in the way in which they kept their own records, and they began to put together what is now part of the Old Testament.

Still, the nation had been destroyed, the Temple was in ruins, and no sacrifices could be offered in a foreign land.

When Cyrus, King of Persia, conquered Babylon, he allowed the Hebrews whom he found there to return home to Jerusalem and to begin to rebuild the Temple. This took place under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah. The rebuilding of the Temple was of great importance to the Hebrews, for though they were not an independent kingdom, yet they had once more a common meeting place in their ancient sanctuary. It had also an importance for the world. The Hebrews never regained political independence, but from this time onward they were all members of

the Jewish Church, and they were now called Jews more often than Hebrews. In the centuries following their return to Jerusalem they completed their history, they wrote down their law, and they recorded their great religious experiences. They were always hoping for a political deliverer who would free them from foreign rule; in reality they were unconsciously preparing the way for a spiritual deliverer who would set them free from bondage to the letter of the law.

The rebuilding of the Temple also inspired poets to express their feelings and thoughts in verse and hymns, and to collect the ancient poetry of the nation. In this way the Psalter, as we know it, began. It consists of a number of smaller collections written at different times and by different poets, a few of which were from very ancient collections that tradition had always associated with the name of David.

The Jews remained under Persian rule, until Persia was in its turn conquered by Alexander the Great. At his death, his vast empire was divided up and Palestine was a much coveted piece of land owing to its favourable position. Egypt and Syria in turn possessed the land, and the latter persecuted the Jews in the hope of making them renounce their religion and customs. The Jews made a vigorous resistance to this persecution under a heroic leader Judas Maccabæus. He was a brilliant general and he inspired his army with courage. He had only a small and poorly equipped following, but the men who composed it were patriots and inspired by an intense enthusiasm for their religion. They had against them well-trained soldiers, armed with the best wea-

pons of the time, and amongst them were Jews who had deserted their own side, who knew every inch of the country and who could spy out all their movements. But in spite of these odds, Judas Maccabæus succeeded in gaining victories, until he was able to enter Jerusalem and restore the Temple and its services. But peace did not last very long, and when another Syrian army invaded the land, Judas Maccabæus was killed in battle and the Jewish cause was lost.

This defeat was a deathblow to the Jewish hopes for independence, but still there was no peace. Ceaseless strife prevailed, until at last Rome interfered and the troubled land of Palestine passed under her control. She was not popular with the people, but her strong hand kept peace and she sent governors to maintain her authority. These rulers grew in power until in 39 B.C. Herod, the ruler of the time, was given the title of King.

Herod was a tyrant, and he only kept the peace at the point of the sword, but when he had made himself quite secure as King, he devoted much time to erecting great buildings, and he rebuilt the Temple with great splendour and magnificence.

But the time was coming when the Jews were to live in Palestine no longer. The rulers under the Romans were tyrannical and the people grew more and more angry at the indignities heaped upon them, until at last open rebellion broke out, and there was war. It reached its height in A.D. 70 when Titus, son of the Roman Emperor came against Jerusalem and besieged it. The city was crowded for the Feast of the

Passover, and famine and pestilence soon appeared in the city. Titus broke through the outer walls and at last the Jews took refuge in the Temple, which was almost like a fortress. Then a Roman soldier threw a flaming torch into the Temple, and a blazing fire broke out. After that the end soon came; the Temple was burnt and the whole city razed to the ground, except three towers and a part of the wall, which were left in order that the world might know how strong was the city taken by Rome. Those of the Jews who had survived, and a few of the vessels from the Temple which had escaped destruction, were taken to be shown as triumphal spoils when Titus returned to Rome.

Never again have the Jews ruled as a nation in Palestine.

Was this the end of the Jewish hopes, of the new and better world that Isaiah had predicted, of the Deliverer whom they expected? At this time the laws of the Jews had become definite, their religious beliefs very rigid; long years of oppression had given a tinge of melancholy to their thought and had taken the joyousness out of life. The very fact that they were a small and politically unimportant nation made them cling to all their old traditions and customs, and this made them narrow and intolerant.

But, whatever their faults, they had developed an enthusiastic zeal for the things of God's kingdom, and they never wavered in their belief that underneath all history there was a plan. The experiences of their history had taught them that there was only

one God, and that belief brings with it the recognition that everything in human life is part of one ordered plan. They had learned what was the character of God, and so they believed that there would come a day when Righteousness would reign throughout the world. They needed an interpreter whose character and teaching would show them, and through them the world, the way to the fulfilment of all that was best and noblest in their hopes.

In the fulness of time, the Teacher came. At Bethlehem, in the days of Herod the King, seventy years before the destruction of Jerusalem, Christ was born, Who by His life and teaching made possible the fulfilment of the ancient visions.

THE HITTITES

THE HITTITES

CHAPTER I

The Land of the Hittites

When Abraham entered Canaan, he found it occupied by a number of different tribes, amongst whom were some who were spoken of by the Hebrew writer as the "children of Heth." These people were also known as Hittites and they seem to have been on very friendly terms with Abraham, for when Sarah, his wife, died, they offered to give him a piece of land in which was a cave to serve as her burying-place. Abraham refused to take the land as a gift, but paid four hundred shekels of silver for it, and the land became his. Sarah was buried there, and it became the burial place of the patriarchs. When Jacob lay dying in Egypt, he charged his sons to take him back to the land of Canaan to bury him in the cave that had been bought from the children of Heth, for, he said, "There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah," and his sons did as he asked.

Long years after, when Moses sent the twelve spies to report on the land of Canaan, they came back

and spoke of the Hittites as "dwelling in the mountains," and later still when Joshua led the Hebrews to the conquest of Canaan, the Hittites are again spoken of as occupying a large part of the land. So these people seem to have been firmly settled in parts of Canaan when the Hebrews arrived. Who were they, and whence had they come?

If you look at the map of the ancient world, you will see in the West, Egypt and the fertile valley of the Nile, in the East, Babylon and Assyria in the Tigris-Euphrates valleys, and between them the strip of land, also fertile, occupied partly by the Hebrews and partly by some other smaller nations. To the North of these lands are the Taurus Mountains. Now to the peoples in the rich, warm valleys beneath, these mountains were an almost insuperable barrier. They were high and difficult to cross, the air was cold and the snow was strange and frightening to the dwellers in the warm plains in the South. So it came about that the people who lived in the North were almost unknown to the Egyptians and Babylonians. The latter knew that a strange, fierce people dwelt there, who seemed afraid of nothing. They came down from their mysterious land in the North, over the cold and snowy mountain passes, strongly armed, to destroy cities and slay the inhabitants (once they actually took Babylon), and then back they would go to their own land with their booty and prisoners. The men of ancient times called these people Khatti, we call them Hittites, and their home was in Asia Minor. The interior of this peninsula is a high table-land, very dry and much of it

desert. Mountains surround it in most directions, and the valleys are fertile.

It was in this country, north of the Taurus Mountains, that the Hittites lived. They were a mountain people, and the sea played no part in their lives, but shepherds and hunters found all that they needed, and the mineral wealth of their land gave them opportunities for trade. Iron was found in the North, and the Hittites were the first people who distributed iron to the ancient world.

CHAPTER II

The Hittite People and Their Cities

We know very little indeed about the Hittites, and our ignorance is chiefly due to the fact that we cannot yet read their writing. They seem to have borrowed forms of writing from both the Egyptians and the Babylonians, and clay tablet dictionaries have been found, showing that the Hittites learned both how to write and spell in the cuneiform script, but the Hittite hieroglyphic writing has not yet been deciphered.

A great deal of Hittite sculpture exists, and so we know what the people looked like. The Armenians of to-day probably resemble them a good deal. They had short, heavy figures, long, prominent noses with markedly receding foreheads and short chins. Because of the mountains which the rest of the civilized world rarely crossed, the Hittites were able to develop in their own way and to become a very strong empire. They were probably originally a group of tribes who found it to their advantage to join together both for purposes of defence and for warlike aggression. In the height of their power they seem to have controlled the whole of Eastern Asia Minor and the North of Syria, and great trade routes passed through

their land. To the west of Asia Minor was the Ægean Sea, dotted with islands, where another ancient civilization flourished. Ægean wares of various kinds have been found in far inland regions, and in those distant days, before anyone had ever dreamed of such things as trains, or motors, or the telegraph or other quick means of communication that are so common today, it was the Hittites who probably formed the link between the peoples of the Ægean and those of Mesopotamia.

One of the earliest important cities of the Hittites was Boghaz-keui in the North of Asia Minor, and it would be difficult to imagine a city more unlike Thebes or Babylon. Those cities were on the banks of broad and shining rivers, surrounded by fertile plains, too hot, perhaps, in the summer, but warm and pleasant in the winter. The Hittite city, on the contrary, was like a great fortress up in the mountains; in the winter, bitterly cold and looking out upon a snowy landscape, in the summer however, enjoying a clear, invigorating, healthy atmosphere. Boghaz-keui was the only large city in the early days, the other towns were probably villages, which served as markets for the country people, though they were in all likelihood fortified, so that in time of war they could serve as places of refuge for the neighbouring people and their flocks.

Boghaz-keui became a great city about the fourteenth century B.C., some centuries after the Pyramids were built. A great Hittite conqueror founded it and he himself became known as the Great King of the Hittites. The town was built on a hill and com-

manded one of the mountain passes; it was strongly fortified with great walls and had towers at intervals. Had any daring explorer from the southern lands reached Boghaz-keui, he would have taken back strange tales of this mysterious fortress city up in the hills. The chief gate was guarded by huge carved lions, with open mouths, showing great teeth, and with their tongues hanging out, most terrifying apparitions to strangers. Inside the town the foundations of five large buildings, probably palaces and temples, have been discovered. The royal palace was build round a central court, out of which opened a great many rooms, leading one into the other. The great buildings were guarded by huge animals like the winged bulls of Assyria, but the Hittites were not as artistic or as skilful in their sculpture as the Assyrians. In one of the rooms of the palace at Boghaz-keui were found a great many clay tablets; the room was evidently the Foreign Office or State Department of the empire, and some of these tablets can be read. In those days the Babylonian was the diplomatic language in use all over the ancient world, just as French was for a long time in Europe, and so most of the diplomatic correspondence between the Kings of the Hittites and their neighbours was written in the Babylonian language and in the cuneiform script. We know practically nothing at all about the learning of the Hittites, but it is evident that the scribes were thoroughly instructed in the Babylonian language and script.

The emblem of the Hittites was an eagle, sometimes one-, sometimes two-headed, and so able to

look in two directions at once, thus keeping double watch over the place he guarded, and a great relief of one exists sculptured near the gateway of one of their cities. It is thought that this device was borrowed in the 13th century A.D. by the Turks and was then introduced into Europe by the Crusaders. This eagle became the emblem of the Teutonic Empire in the fourteenth century, thus linking modern times with the strange mysterious Hittite people of ancient days.

In one of the Hittite invasions of the South, the Babylonians were much mystified over a strange animal the Hittites brought with them. Not knowing what it was, they called it the "animal of the mountains." This unknown animal was the horse, which was known to the Hittites earlier than to either the Egyptians or the Babylonians, and some of the earliest sculptured representations of the horse are Hittite. The Hittite armies made use of large numbers of war chariots. There were always three men in a Hittite war chariot: the driver, the shield bearer, and the warrior himself.

Boghaz-keui had been the capital of the old Hittite power, but in later times it became less important. The Hittites had extended their empire and a new Hittite power arose, of which Carchemish, south of the mountains, became the chief city. It was a very rich and important trading centre on the highway from Mesopotamia to both the West and the North, and it is still an important centre, and is one of the stopping places on the modern railway to Bagdad.

We can only guess at the Hittite religion from the

sculptures that have been found. They evidently had a great many gods, special gods who watched over the cities, others who were gods of mountains and rivers, of heaven and earth. Sometimes they seem to have thought that the mysterious and unknown powers of their gods would frighten away any intruders who came with hostile intentions, and there exists a sculptured relief of a god sitting between two fierce lions, whom he holds back, ready to let loose to spring at any doubtful stranger who might be approaching the city of which he was the guardian.

CHAPTER III

The Hittites and Their Neighbours

As we have seen, the mountains formed a barrier between the Hittites and the rest of the ancient world, but it was a one-sided barrier, which prevented the peoples of the South from penetrating into Asia Minor, but which did not prevent the Hittites from coming into the lands of their southern neighbours, and the Hittites undoubtedly knew a great deal more about the Egyptians and Babylonians than the peoples of these lands knew about the Hittites. Even Assurbanipal, King of Assyria, sent back word to the King of Lydia in Asia Minor who had appealed to him for help, that neither he nor his father had ever heard of the place. Of course this may have been an expression of scorn on the part of the ruler of a great and powerful country for a place which he held to be unimportant, but in any case it points to a general ignorance on the part of the Assyrians of the lands beyond the mountains.

The Hittites probably knew the Egyptians at a very early date, but their first real connection with any of their neighbours seems to have been the raid already mentioned into Babylon, which happened some eighteen hundred years before Christ. They

carried off the statue of the Babylonian god Marduk, which they seem to have kept for about three hundred years. Then the Babylonians sent an embassy to ask for its return. One can picture the ambassadors setting out on what must have seemed to them a perilous journey into a strange and unknown land. But they were willing to face the dangers not only of what they thought was a barbarous land, but also of a fierce and unfriendly people, in order to recover their god. One rather wonders why they waited three hundred years, but they went in the end and received back the image, and Marduk was restored to his home.

We have already seen that the Hittites were in Canaan in the days of Abraham, and they are frequently referred to in the Old Testament. Sometimes they lived on friendly terms with the Hebrews who intermarried with them. Esau married a Hittite maiden, but his parents did not like this marriage, and we are told that it was a "grief of mind unto Isaac and Rebekah." As the power of the Hebrews grew in Canaan, that of the Hittites declined, and they seem to have become in some measure subject to the Hebrews who exacted tribute from them.

But the chief contact of the Hittites with the world beyond the mountains was that with Egypt in the reign of Ramses II, the Pharaoh of the Oppression. Just before this time the Hittites, under a young, energetic and ambitious king, had much extended their territory and their power, and they had become a force to be reckoned with. Under this king they

made a treaty with Egypt by which they kept the places south of the mountains which they had conquered. It was, however, when Ramses II was the Pharaoh that the Hittites and Egyptians faced each other in a great trial of strength. They met in battle at Kadesh. Ramses was young, vigorous, and brave, and a great soldier, but at first the battle seemed to be going in favour of the Hittites; his daring and good generalship, however, saved the day for him, and he claimed that in a great victory he had defeated the Hittites and destroyed the flower of their army. This was probably an exaggeration of what actually took place, but Ramses commemorated his victory in magnificent sculpture and in a great poem, in which he gives an account of how nearly he had lost the day, which was saved for him by the help of the god Amon. He says:

My warriors and my chariots had deserted me; not one of them stood by me. Then I prayed, where art thou, my father Amon? and Amon heard me and came at my prayer. He stretched out his hand to me and I shouted for joy. . . . I was changed. I became like a god . . . like a god in his strength, I slew the hosts of the enemy: not one escaped me. Alone I did it.

Following the battle of Kadesh a treaty was made between Ramses and the Hittite King. Egyptian ambassadors went to Boghaz-keui, and in consultation with the Hittite King and his ministers, a treaty was drawn up and inscribed on a silver tablet and brought back to Egypt, where it was presented to

[1] From A. E. Cowley: *The Hittites*

Ramses for his approval. When it had received his assent, Egyptian scribes made another copy of it on another silver tablet which was sent back to the Hittite King. Babylonian being the diplomatic language, the treaty was written in Babylonian and in the cuneiform script. The scribes in both countries at once made new copies; in Egypt they were inscribed on stone and placed in the temples; away off in the Hittite land, the copies were made on clay tablets. Until quite recently the Egyptian copies were the only ones known to be in existence, but in 1906, in the heart of Asia Minor, more than a thousand miles away from Egypt, two tablets in Babylonian script were discovered and they were found to be notes about the ancient treaty in words corresponding almost exactly to the form already known in Egypt.

The treaty begins:

> Ramses the great King, King of Egypt, has made himself in a treaty upon a silver tablet with the great King, King of the land Hatti, his brother, from this day to give good peace and good brotherhood between us forever; and he is a brother to me and at peace with me, and I am a brother to him and at peace with him for ever. And we have made brotherhood, peace and goodwill more than the brotherhood and peace of former times, which was between Egypt and Hatti.

Then follow clauses in which mutual help is promised if either of the kings is in danger from an enemy, and a promise that the enemies of either shall not find a refuge in the land of the other.

The gods of Egypt and of the Hittites were called as witnesses to the treaty which concluded:

As to these words which are upon this tablet of silver of the land of Hatti and of the land of Egypt as to him who shall not keep them, a thousand gods of the land of Hatti and a thousand gods of the land of Egypt shall destroy his house, his land and his servants. But he who shall keep these words which are on this tablet of silver be they Hatti or be they Egyptians, and who do not neglect them, a thousand gods of the land of Hatti and a thousand gods of the land of Egypt will cause him to be healthy and to live together with his houses and his land and his servants.[1]

One would think that a treaty with such an ending would be kept, for it would surely have been somewhat dangerous to have incurred the wrath of a thousand gods in each country.

A few years after the treaty had been signed, a Hittite princess came to Egypt to be the bride of Ramses. The Egyptians gave her a name which meant, "The princess who seeth the beauties of Ra." The marriage was made the occasion of a state visit of the Hittite King to Egypt. As a rule in those days foreign kings only visited each other's lands when they were bent on war, so this peaceful visit was not only a great event, but almost the only one of its kind known in the history of the ancient world. The King and his daughter were accompanied by a large number of tributary kings, chiefs and other vassals, and they were laden with gifts of gold and silver.

[1] Translated by S. Langdon and Alan H. Gardiner.

To the great surprise of the Egyptians they came in the winter, and the Egyptians thought they must indeed be a strange people who braved the dangers of snow and frost and ice for the sake of not delaying their journey.

The Hittites and the Egyptians were now on very friendly terms, and when the Hittite King and his attendants were about to leave Egypt, Ramses made them a parting speech which was later inscribed on stone to be preserved, in which he wished them a pleasant journey, unhindered by snow or ice. But such a journey was far too great an undertaking for Ramses to make a return visit, especially as he probably thought it quite unnecessary to show the Hittite King such honour, as in spite of his friendliness and his bride, he considered himself very superior to the king of the distant land beyond the mountains, as in truth he was. But when a little later he heard that the sister of the Hittite queen was sick and supposed to be possessed by a devil, he permitted the image of Khonsu, an Egyptian god, to be sent to her. This god was famous for his wonderful power of expelling evil spirits, and in great and magnificent state he was sent to the land of the Hittites, where he was said to have cured the suffering princess. A god with such powers was too valuable to be lost, however, and so the Hittites kept him for nearly four years. But at that time the Hittite King had a dream in which he saw the god fly out of his shrine towards Egypt; so rather than risk incurring the wrath of the god, the Hittites sent him home by ambassadors laden with rich and costly gifts.

The Hittites came once more in contact with Egypt, when Ramses wanted some iron and asked for it. But he was told that there was none available at the moment, but it should be sent as soon as it could be procured, and in the meantime they sent him an iron sword blade as a gift.

After this the Hittite power began to diminish, and it grew weaker and weaker, until at last in the eighth century B.C. Carchemish fell before the Assyrian King who made it one of his provinces. The Hittite empire disappeared, but the people as a race remained.

The period of the Hittite empire was a stirring time in history. Egypt and Babylon were the centres of civilizations that even then were ancient, and between them in Asia Minor was the younger Hittite civilization, not as great as the others, and to us today still very shadowy and mysterious, but it was there and of a widespread influence. The Hebrews were entering Palestine and were coming into contact with it. About the same time other great events were taking place, which made the period one of growth and interest. New colonizers were in the South of Palestine, and in the North of Asia Minor, Troy was being attacked by the Greeks. It was a great period in the history of the ancient world, full of stirring events and hero deeds, none the less real because so little known. But the shadows that have hidden them for so long are slowly being dispersed, for archæologists have had imagination to see beneath the desolate mounds in those distant lands, and their spades are revealing the life of these dim and mysterious ancient peoples and are gradually making them real and alive to us.

THE PERSIANS

THE PERSIANS

CHAPTER I

The People of Ancient Persia

During the time when Babylon and Assyria were great and flourishing empires, the mountainous region to the East of the Persian Gulf was inhabited by some shepherd tribes who dressed in skins, lived on scanty fare, and led a very simple, hardy life. They were known as the Medes and Persians, and at first they had no art or literature, though they had many stirring hero tales, which had been handed down for many generations and which were never forgotten.

These shepherd tribes spread their religion over a large part of Western Asia. Their teacher was called Zoroaster, and their sacred book the Zend-Avesta, which means "Law and Explanation." Zoroaster was born towards the end of the seventh century B.C. and he was probably an old man when the Hebrews were taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar. Not very much is known about his life, but tradition tells us that he, like so many other great religious teachers, withdrew for a long time from the world, living alone, sometimes in caves, sometimes in the silent forest, or

in the mountains. He wanted to satisfy the searching of his spirit, which sought an answer to the question of how the conflict between good and evil was to be solved. It is said that whilst Zoroaster was living alone in the silent places of the land, a vision came to him which satisfied his questioning, and he returned to his fellow-men to be their prophet and teacher. He taught them that the good in the world was a god, whom he called Ahuramazda, and who was aided by many good spirits, the chief of whom was Light, and so Light came to be worshipped by the Persians under the form of Fire, but they did not build temples, they worshipped on the hill-tops and mountains. Ahuramazda and his good spirits were supposed to dwell in the East in the light of the rising sun, and their enemy the Spirit of Evil, lived in the West in the shadows of darkness. Men were taught by Zoroaster to help Ahuramazda by thinking lovely thoughts and doing good and unselfish deeds, by cultivating the earth which they held sacred, and by killing all harmful animals, sent as they believed by the Spirit of Evil. They especially disliked animals that lived in dark holes, and it was considered a good deed to kill them.

Other animals, however, especially all useful ones, were held in high esteem, and the dog in particular. In one of the sacred writings Ahuramazda is made to say:

I have made the dog self-clothed and self-shod, watchful, wakeful, and sharp-toothed, born to take his food from man and to watch over man's goods. . . . And

whosoever shall awake at his voice, neither shall the thief, nor the wolf steal anything from his house without being warned; the wolf shall be smitten and torn to pieces. . . . For no house could subsist on the earth made by Ahura, but for those two dogs of mine, the shepherd's dog and the house-dog.[1]

The religious teaching of Zoroaster was one of very high ideals. It required that everyone should make up his mind to be quite definitely on one side or the other: to follow the Good and the Light, or to dwell with the Evil and Darkness, and like the Egyptian teaching it taught that the lives of men on earth would be judged hereafter, and so it made character of great importance.

In one part of the Zend-Avesta Zoroaster tells the Persians that he had asked Ahuramazda if all men must die, must they "leave the waters that run, the corn that grows and all the rest of their wealth?" and the answer came, "Yes, and the soul must enter the way made by Time and open both to the wicked and the righteous." How did the Persians reach their heaven? They believed that for three days after death the soul sat near the head of his body, happy if his life had been a good one, miserable if it had been evil. As the dawn of the fourth morning broke, a sweet and fragrant wind blew from the South, and the soul went towards the bridge which led to heaven and beneath which lay hell. There, if he had led a righteous life he met "a fair, a white-armed maiden as fair as the fairest things in this world." When he

[1] From Sir Percy Sykes: *History of Persia.*

asked who she was, she replied: "O thou youth of good thought, good words, and good deeds, I am thy own conscience."[1] Then she led the soul across the bridge into the presence of Ahuramazda who received him with honour. But if a man had led an evil life, on approaching the bridge he was met by a hideous old woman, and instead of crossing he fell over into hell, the Abode of Falsehood.

The Zend-Avesta was originally written in letters of gold on twelve thousand ox-hides, but most of these were destroyed when the Great Kings of Persia fell; a few, however, were saved and taken to India where they were treasured by the Indian followers of the Persian prophet.

The teaching of Zoroaster stood out in strong contrast to the beliefs of most other peoples of the ancient world, and it is interesting to notice that though the Hebrew prophets condemned the idolatry of all other nations surrounding Israel, they did not condemn that of the Persians. The faith of Zoroaster was not the pure belief in the one God of Righteousness of the Hebrews, but it was a more noble faith than those of the other ancient peoples, and whereas they have all long since disappeared, in its ancient Persian home the faith of Zoroaster still survives today.

Here is a prayer taken from the Zend-Avesta: "Give us knowledge, sagacity; quickness of tongue; holiness of soul; a good memory; and then the understanding that goeth on growing, and that understanding which cometh not through learning."

The Persians were known amongst the ancient

[1] From Sir Percy Sykes: *History of Persia.*

peoples for their splendid horsemanship and for being good marksmen, things they had learned when they were young, for the education of Persian boys consisted in three things: how to ride, how to shoot, and to speak the truth.

CHAPTER II

The Story of the Behistun Rock

Near the site of the ancient city of Ecbatana, the old capital of the Median kings, on a rocky hill-side, are three inscriptions and a great slab of sculpture engraved on the stone. They have been there for centuries, exposed to wind and weather and seemingly out of the reach of man. The modern Persian natives who could not have read them, even if they had clambered up the face of the rock to see them, called them by a word which means "Treasure Story," and there was a legend attached to the strange carvings. It was said that they told the secret of where a great treasure could be found, and that whoever was able to read them should have the treasure. Little did the natives imagine what the treasure was, not one of gold or silver or precious stones, but a key that would open the door to a priceless store of historical records. This treasure was found by an Englishman, Henry Rawlinson, a soldier and a scholar, who scaled the rock and read the inscriptions. It was a perilous undertaking, for they are more than a hundred feet from the ground on the steep side of a rock that is seventeen hundred feet high, and even when the rock was scaled it was a difficult task to make drawings

and copy the inscriptions. But it must have been an even more perilous undertaking for the ancient sculptors to have climbed up and to secure a foothold whilst they carved. This rock is known as the Behistun Rock, and like the Rosetta Stone in Egypt, it gave the key to the deciphering of the old cuneiform writing.

Above the inscriptions is a slab of sculpture on which stands Darius the King, with a bow in his left hand and his right hand raised as he pronounces sentence on nine prisoners who stand before him. Their hands are tied behind them and a rope is round their necks. One prisoner lies prostrate beneath the feet of the King, entreating for mercy, but the King tramples on him ruthlessly. Behind the King stand his quiver-bearer and other attendants, and above him floats the god, Ahuramazda, giving him his blessing and a ring as a token of his kingship.

The inscriptions below are written in three scripts, in Persian, in Babylonian cuneiform, and in the form of Babylonian used in Susa. The second and third inscriptions are translations of the first, and as the Persian script had already been deciphered it gave a key to the decipherment of the cuneiform. These inscriptions were put there by Darius on this great rock that can be clearly seen from the caravan route that passes there, so that all travellers might see this record of his triumph over his foes. First the King gives honour to the great god of the Persians, and then he goes on to say that the Great King of Persia is the King of Kings, King of the countries which have many peoples, King of the great earth even to

afar. Then he briefly recounts his chief exploits and ends with laying the curse of Ahuramazda on whomsoever should destroy the inscriptions, but promising to those who leave them undisturbed that they shall live long and that the god will be their friend for ever.

As time went by the Great Kings lost their power and their empire was broken up, but the tale of the greatness of one of them still stands on the lonely rock where it has stood for more than two thousand years.

CHAPTER III

The Story of Cyrus

The Medes first became important in history at the time when the Assyrian empire was destroyed, for it was they who helped the Babylonians to burn Nineveh. The chief city of the King of the Medes was Ecbatana, a name meaning "the meeting place of many roads." It stood in a fertile plain, where there were roads in all directions to Babylon, Assyria and Persia. It was a very ancient city and Herodotus tells us that the walls protecting it were arranged in seven circles, with each battlement rising higher than the last and coloured differently: white, black, red, blue, orange, silver and gold. Later, when the Medes had been conquered by Persia, the Great Kings made Ecbatana their summer residence. It was there that the treasure of Crœsus was brought by Cyrus, and that the decree allowing the Hebrews to return to Jerusalem was found.

After the fall of Assyria the Medes ruled the northern part of what had once been Assyria, until in their turn they were conquered by the Persians, their own kinsfolk. Herodotus gives the old tradition of how it came about.

A King of the Medes once had a dream, in which he

saw a vine springing from his daughter and overshadowing all Asia. Like the Pharaoh and Belshazzar he believed in dreams, and so he sent for his wise men, who told him that his dream meant that his daughter's son would one day rule in his place. This Median princess had married a Persian prince, and so the King of the Medes became very jealous and angry. To prevent his grandson ever usurping his throne, he sent for one of his trusted ministers, and ordered him to take the baby out on the mountains to die. The minister, however, was afraid that one day the King might repent of this cruel deed and would try to hold him responsible. So he gave the baby to a cowherd, telling him to kill the child. Now the baby of the cowherd and his wife had died that very day, and so the mother begged her husband to let her keep the little prince and to leave the body of their baby out on the mountain-side in his stead. This was done, and the prince grew up in the cowherd's hut as his son. When he was older, he became very popular with all the boys in the neighbourhood and they often played together. A favourite game was to choose one of their number as king of the rest, and to have him rule for a day.

One day, Cyrus, as the prince was called, was chosen king. One of the boys refused to do his bidding, so Cyrus ordered him to be beaten. This boy had a rich and important father, who was so angry that a cowherd should have dared to have his son beaten, that he actually complained to the King about it. Cyrus was sent for, and when asked why he had acted in that way, he said:

O King, what I did, I did to him justly. The boys in the village and this one among them, chose me as their king in play, because they thought me best suited for the honour. All the other boys performed their tasks, but this one was disobedient and paid no heed to my command, and that is why he was punished. Now if for this crime I deserve chastisement, here I am.

This answer pleased the King, and he began to make enquiries about the boy, and he found out what had happened and that he was his grandson. He asked his wise men if it would be safe to allow the boy to live, and they decided that the dream had already been fulfilled, because Cyrus had reigned as king, even if only in play over the other boys, so Cyrus was allowed to live.

But the King of the Medes, though he was glad that his grandson was alive, was so angry at having been disobeyed by his minister, that he ordered his son to be killed as a punishment. From that time on, the minister was always planning how he might destroy the King, and when Cyrus was a man and had become King of Persia, he planned a pretence of war between the Medes and Persians, but when the time of battle arrived, he gave up his whole army into the hands of Cyrus. In this way Cyrus became King of the Medes as well as of Persia. He treated his grandfather kindly, however, and allowed him to live in his palace until his death, but all his power was taken from him.

Such is the story, as it was believed in ancient times, of how Cyrus became King.

CHAPTER IV

The Great Kings of Persia

The King of Persia was always called the "Great King," and Cyrus was the first who made Persia into a great empire. He made the army strong and powerful, and then set out to conquer more land for Persia.

At this time the chief state in Asia Minor was Lydia, the name of whose King, Crœsus, has become famous for all time on account of his enormous wealth. His capital was at Sardis, and it was not only filled with his treasure, but scholars and artists from far and near were invited and welcomed there, and the fame of Crœsus spread all over Asia Minor. He developed the trade and commerce of his kingdom, and as far as is known the earliest coins of which we have historical record, came from Lydia.

The Lydians were famous for their horsemanship and were dreaded by their foes, but there was coming from the East a mightier power, before whom even their celebrated horsemen would fall. Cyrus and his great army came and defeated them, and Lydia was added to the Persian land, and according to the Persian custom was compelled to offer the Great King earth and water as a token of submission. Then the Greek cities on the coast fell, until at last all Asia Minor called Cyrus King. But he was not yet con-

tent, and in 538 B.C. Babylon fell before his conquering army, and Persia was an Empire.

Cyrus was both a good general and a wise statesman. He did not try to force those whom he had conquered to obey him by crushing and oppressing them, he endeavoured to secure their loyalty by acts of kindness. He rebuilt the walls of Babylon and restored the temples, and he treated all his subjects in the same way. In one of his inscriptions he says: "The gods whose sanctuaries from of old had lain in ruins I brought back again to their dwelling-places and caused them to reside there for ever. All the citizens of these lands I assembled and I restored them to their homes." [1] Wherever it was possible, Cyrus allowed native princes to rule over the different parts of his empire, and in all that he did he showed the mind of a great statesman.

Cyrus was one of the great hero figures of the ancient world. His good looks, his courage and his fine statesmanship made him looked up to as the ideal king, and in the next century a Greek writer wrote of him in a way that was perhaps exaggerated, but which gives us some idea of the great extent of his influence. The men of the ancient world were always more ready to be influenced by a great leader than by an idea, and Cyrus was just such a leader, and in his ideals he stands far above most of the other rulers of his time.

His tomb can still be seen, though it was plundered in ancient times and now stands empty. His body was placed in a gilt coffin which rested on a couch with golden feet and was covered with rich purple

[1] From C. F. Kent

tapestries, and the walls of the tomb were hung with tapestry from Babylon. In the chamber there were rich suits of clothes and weapons and jewels, and the King's own shield and sword and bow. A very simple inscription told who was buried there. It ran: "O man, I am Cyrus, who founded the greatness of Persia and ruled Asia. Grudge me not this monument."

Cyrus was succeeded by his son, who conquered Egypt, and he, in his turn, was followed by another great King, Darius, who added part of India to the Persian Empire, so that the Great King now ruled over an empire which stretched from the river Indus in the East to the Nile in the West. The Persians boasted that "the kingdom extended so far to the South that man cannot live there because of the heat, and Northward to where they cannot exist because of the cold." The world had never seen such an empire before.

The Persians had changed very much from the early days when they were simple shepherd tribes in the mountains. Darius ruled over a well-organized empire. The capital was at Susa, and this great city must have been a wonderful sight as the traveller over the vast plain first caught a glimpse of it with its citadel and palaces, and flourishing market place. A great road, called the Royal Road, was built from Susa to Sardis. It was counted as a three months' journey for a man on foot, but the swift mounted eastern messengers could cover the ground in fifteen days. A postal system was organized within the empire and other good roads were made. Darius also

made trading easier by a greater use of coins as money, and the gold Daric, accepted everywhere, because of the purity of the metal, became the standard coin of the ancient trading world. This empire was so large that Darius divided it into twenty provinces called Satrapies, and the governor of each was called a Satrap. But this great empire was held together by the will of one man, and not by the loyal allegiance of many parts to one whole, and Darius was always afraid that some of his satraps might be disloyal and raise up a rebellion. To prevent this, royal officials were sent by the King to live at each court, and it was their duty to report anything that seemed suspicious. They were called the "King's Eyes," and the "King's Ears." Darius also built up a navy and Persia became a sea as well as a land power. But the Persian people themselves were not naturally sailors, and the fleet was chiefly made up of the ships of the seafaring nations that had been subdued.

The Persians were not original in their buildings: they had great halls filled with columns such as the Egyptians had built before them; they copied the winged bulls of Assyria, as well as walls of enamelled brick. Magnificent palaces were built by Darius and his son Xerxes at Persepolis, parts of which can still be seen. They took other ideas, too, from the Assyrians, they learned from them to be luxurious and so they lost their old simple habits.

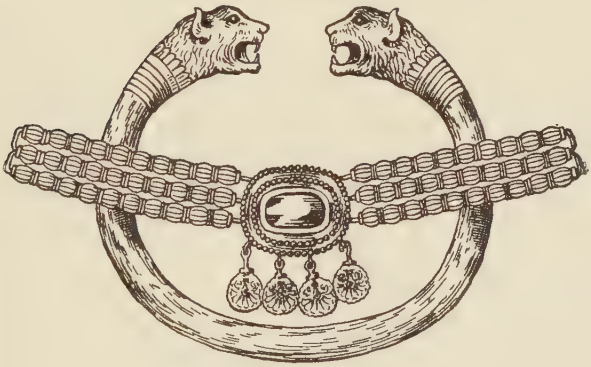
Darius ruled over nearly all the world, but he was not content, and when from over the blue Ægean Sea, dotted with islands, there came a band of men who helped a rebellious tribe to burn one of his cities,

Darius determined, first, to punish the invaders, and then, hearing how fair was their land, nothing would satisfy him but that he must add it to his empire. But the story of how the Persian met the Greek belongs to the history of Greece rather than to that of Persia, and so that story must be told in another place. Never before in the history of the world had there been so great an empire which required government on so large a scale. The Persians were the first great organizers, but the many nations that made up the empire had no voice in the government. One man alone controlled that mighty empire, and from the North to the South, and from the Nile to India, the word of the Great King was law, the "law of the Medes and Persians that changeth not."

Cyrus and Darius were Great Kings in every sense of the word, and the ancient world had never seen anything like them before. Some of the Pharaohs had been equally magnificent and as great generals, but they had never ruled over so vast an empire made up of so many different nations, and none of them had been governed by ideals such as those which governed Cyrus. But the power of the Great Kings did not last. The Persian empire received its death blow when the Greeks defeated Xerxes, who had succeeded Darius. For though few in numbers, the Greeks were fighting for the cause of freedom, and they prevailed. From that time onwards the Persian power grew less, until at last the Great Kings fell before another conqueror, and Alexander the Great ruled over their land.

Map of the Persian Empire and Borderlands.

THE PHOENICIANS



THE PHOENICIANS

CHAPTER I

The Land and People of Phœnicia

The land of Phœnicia was the strip of fertile land on the east of the Mediterranean. It was about two hundred miles long, and at its widest, only thirty-five miles across, in places it was only half that width. It faced West towards the setting sun, the direction in which adventurous spirits have always turned. It was a very fertile land, and the name "Phœnicia" means "the region of palms"; grain grew there in abundance, and the vine, orange, olive and mulberry trees; the forests were rich in timber for building purposes, especially the cedar of Lebanon, and the coast lines afforded good harbours. The position of Phœnicia was exceedingly good; on the North and East mountain ranges protected her from the armies which so often invaded and harassed the land between Mesopotamia and Egypt, and the sea lay on the West. Phœnicia occupied a unique position in the middle of the world as it was known to ancient peoples.

In this well favoured little land, there lived a remarkable people. In appearance they were of medium

height, with thick hair and broad and often hooked noses. They were vigorous and active, and were a nation of sailors and traders. Their character fitted them for this life. They were not soldiers, though they could defend themselves and their country bravely when need arose, but they did not seek occasions to quarrel, and were more interested in the development of their commerce and wealth than in building up a great empire by means of conquest. They got on well with other nations and were always welcomed by them: the Egyptians traded with them and allowed them to build a temple to their own gods in the Egyptian capital; the Hebrews traded and intermarried with them, and the Phœnicians supplied them with workmen as well as materials; the Assyrians and Babylonians not only traded with them, but protected their caravans, and allowed them a free passage through their empire from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf; the Greeks welcomed them in their ports; and the Persians, even after they had conquered them, allowed them to keep their own kings, taxed them lightly, and relied on them to supply ships for their fleets.

The Phœnicians had endless capacity for hard work, and were capable of enduring great hardships, but at the same time they loved luxury and ease, and their cities were centres of very luxurious living. They spoke a language that was very like Hebrew, but they have left no literature behind them, their interests were all active, practical and commercial. They were the greatest traders, miners, manufacturers, sailors and colonizers of their time.

The chief god of Phœnicia was Baal, who was sometimes known by his Canaanite name of Moloch. He was supposed to be the Sun-God, who destroyed by his consuming fire, and who brought the drought and dried up the springs. The Phœnicians believed that they must propitiate him by offering to him that which was dearest to them, and their principal sacrifice of this kind was that of children. This cruel and brutal side of their religion tended to make the people themselves cruel and brutal and developed the lower side of their nature. They had no belief in a future life, they called death "the time of non-existence," and said that those who died "went down into silence and became mute." The only immortality for which they hoped was to be always remembered on earth.

The Phœnicians came into frequent contact with the Hebrews whose land was so near their own. Jezebel, the daughter of a Phœnician king, married Ahab King of Israel, and through her influence many of the Phœnician religious customs were introduced amongst the Hebrews, though they were always sternly denounced by the Hebrew prophets, especially by Elijah.

But though the Phœnicians were not a people of high ideals, and constantly disregarded the rights of others, especially those of the weak, by their perseverance and their fearless defiance of danger, they became the carriers of a great civilization.

CHAPTER II

Phœnician Cities and Industries

The government of Phœnicia was not a strong and central one like that of Egypt or Assyria. The cities were partly independent and were only bound together by a loose kind of confederation, and in case of attack, each had to defend itself. In spite of her protected position and her general friendliness with other nations, Phœnicia was attacked from time to time by the great empires of the period, and she submitted in turn to them all. She preferred to live under the protection of a strong foreign power and to be allowed to pursue her commerce in peace, to making a very stubborn resistance and so risking destruction. After submission had been made, rebellions occurred from time to time, but in the end the Phœnicians generally acknowledged the overlordship of the foreign power, and whatever may have been their feelings, they paid the tribute exacted of them, and then settled down to their former way of living. In this way Phœnicia owed allegiance in turn to Assyria, Babylon, Persia and Alexander the Great, until in the time of the Romans she was at last completely conquered and ceased to exist as a nation.

The chief cities of Phœnicia were Tyre and Sidon. There are practically no remains of the architecture in these cities; the foundations of the buildings were of stone, but the houses themselves seem to have been constructed of wood, and they have therefore, disappeared completely. Tyre was the chief city and the capital. It was strongly fortified and had an excellent harbour in which the fleet could be so well protected, that it was said to be "as if within a house whose doors were bolted."

The Phœnicians did not actually invent anything themselves, but they learnt from the countries with which they traded and in many cases improved upon the models, and they were famous in the ancient world for the manufacture of four things: Purple dye, glass, woven fabrics and fine metal work. The purple dye came from the murex, a shell fish found all over the Mediterranean, but of a particularly fine quality and in large quantities on the coast of Phœnicia. According to the old Phœnician legend, the murex had been discovered by the god, Melkart, who noticed that his dog's nose always got red after he had been poking about amongst the murex shells. As a matter of fact, the dye was probably first discovered by the men of Crete. The colouring matter was a creamy liquid contained in a small sac, yellowish in colour, but turning first green and then purple as soon as it was exposed to the light. Large numbers of the murex were required, as three hundred pounds of liquid would only dye fifty pounds of wool. This dyeing industry was carried on chiefly in Tyre, and

Tyrian purple speedily became very famous and was everywhere considered a great luxury.

Glass-blowing was the chief industry of Sidon. The Sidonians had probably first learnt the art in Egypt, but they rapidly improved upon the Egyptian methods, and Sidonian glass, vases, bowls, drinking-cups and vessels of all kinds became very celebrated. Sidon was also the chief centre for the weaving of beautiful fabrics, first of linen and then of wool, later of silk. The fabrics were not only beautifully woven, but rich in colour and embroidery.

Tyrian craftsmen were also famous for the engraving of gems, which they had learnt from the Babylonians, and all kinds of fine metal work. In as ancient a time as the days of Homer, the poet spoke of:

> A silver bowl well wrought,
> By Sidon's artists cunningly adorned,
> Borne by Phœnicians o'er the dark blue sea.

The golden bowls, basins, spoons and censers in Solomon's Temple at Jerusalem, as well as all kinds of work in bronze, were the work of men from Tyre. The bronze they used was of a particularly fine quality and their designs were artistic. Beautiful Phœnician jewelry is still in existence, and engraved precious stones of all kinds, the latter being used chiefly as signets or talismans.

With these rich products of their own land to offer in exchange, the Phœnicians went out by land and sea to trade with the whole world. The Hebrew prophet Ezekiel has given a description of the wealth

and greatness of Tyre and of the many places with which she traded. He says:

O thou that dwellest at the entry of the sea,
Which art the merchant of the peoples unto many isles,
Thy borders are in the heart of the sea;
Thy builders have perfected thy beauty.
They have made all thy planks of fir trees from Senir;
They have taken cedars from Lebanon to make a mast for thee,
Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars;
They have made thy benches of ivory,
Inlaid in boxwood, from the isles of Kittim.
Of fine linen with broidered work from Egypt was thy sail,
That it might be to thee for an ensign;
Blue and purple from the isles of Elishah was thy awning.
The inhabitants of Zidon and of Arvad were thy rowers;
Thy wise men, O Tyre, were in thee . . . they were thy pilots.
All the ships of the sea, with their mariners, were in thee,
That they might occupy thy merchandise.
Tarshish was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches;
With silver, iron, tin, and lead they traded for thy wares.
Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy traffickers;
They traded the persons of men, and vessels of brass, for thy merchandise.
They of the house of Togarmah traded for thy wares,
With horses, and war-horses and mules.
Syria was thy merchant by reason of the multitude of thy handiworks:
They traded for thy wares with emeralds, purple, and broidered work,

And with fine linen, and coral, and rubies.
Judah and the land of Israel, they were thy traffickers;
They traded for thy merchandise wheat of Minnith,
And Pannag, and honey, and oil, and balm.
Damascus was thy merchant for the multitude of thy handiworks,
By reason of the multitude of all kinds of riches:
With the wine of Helbon, and white wool.
Arabia, and all the princes of Kedar, they were the merchants of thy hand,
In lambs, and rams, and goats, in these were they thy merchants.
The traffickers of Sheba and Raamah, they were thy traffickers;
They traded for thy wares with chief of all spices,
And with all manner of precious stones and gold.
And many others were thy traffickers,
Those who traded in choice wares,
In wrappings of blue and broidered work, and in chests of rich apparel,
Bound with cords, and made of cedar, among thy merchandise;
The ships of Tarshish were thy caravans for thy merchandise;
And thou wast replenished, and made very glorious, in the heart of the sea.
When thy wares went forth out of the seas, thou fillest many peoples;
Thou didst enrich the kings of the earth with thy merchandise and thy riches.
All the inhabitants of the isles are astonished at thee.

(Taken from parts of Ezekiel xxvii)

CHAPTER III

Phœnician Sailors and Traders

The earliest Phœnician ships were very small, rowed by from twelve to twenty men, all sitting on one level, and with a large square sail in the middle. Later they used biremes, which were comparatively short boats, with two decks, and with from thirty to fifty rowers. They were well equipped and armed, though to modern eyes they would seem extraordinarily small. The following description of a Phœnician ship was written by Xenophon, a Greek historian who lived in the fourth century B.C., who had himself seen one:

I think that the best and most perfect arrangement of things which I ever saw was when I went to look at the great Phœnician trading vessel: For I saw the largest amount of naval tackling separately disposed in the smallest stowage possible. For a ship, as you well know, is brought to anchor, and again got under way, by a vast number of wooden implements, and of ropes, and sails the sea by means of a quantity of rigging, and is armed with a number of contrivances against hostile vessels, and carries about with it a large supply of weapons for the crew, and, besides. has all the utensils that a man keeps in his dwelling-house, for each of the

messes. In addition, it is loaded with a quantity of merchandise, which the owner carries with him for his own profit. Now all the things which I have mentioned lay in a space not much bigger than a room that would conveniently hold ten beds. And I remarked that they severally lay in such a way that they did not obstruct one another, and did not require anyone to look for them, and yet they were neither placed at random, nor entangled one with another, so as to consume time when they were suddenly wanted for use. Also I found the captain's assistant, who is called "the look-out man," so well acquainted with the position of all the articles, and with the number of them, that even when at a distance he could tell where everything lay, and how many there were of each sort, just as one who had learned to read could tell the number of letters in the name of Socrates and the proper place for each of them. Moreover, I saw this man in his leisure moments, examining and testing everything that a vessel needs when at sea; so, as I was surprised, I asked him what he was about, whereupon he replied, "Stranger, I am looking to see, in case anything should happen, how everything is arranged in the ship and whether anything is wanting or is inconveniently situated; for when a storm arises at sea, it is not possible either to look for what is wanting, or to put to rights what is arranged awkwardly."

In these little ships the Phœnicians set out on their voyages across unknown seas, to strange shores, often meeting wild and savage natives, in search of new opportunities for trade, for adding to their wealth, or just for pure adventure. They had very real perils to face. The Mediterranean storms come up suddenly and are violent, voyages along the coast are

always more dangerous than those in the open sea, there was always danger from pirates, and in addition to these known dangers, there were those of the unknown regions into which they sailed. But they went fearlessly on, even between the pillars of Hercules out into the Atlantic, which was supposed to be the abode of monsters with three heads and six arms, and where the flat world came to an end, on to the shores of Britain.

The Phœnicians carried the trade and civilization of the great eastern empires from their own land to the islands of the Ægean, to Greece and Italy, and from Egypt along the coast of North Africa to Gaul and Spain. They took with them their own manufactures, as well as goods brought from Mesopotamia by their caravans, and in the islands of the Ægean and in Greece they exchanged them for bronzes and other works of art; in Cyprus they found boxwood inlaid with ivory; from Egypt came fine linen and embroidery as well as grain; the coasts of North Africa were rich in skins, horns, leather, ivory, ebony, ostrich feathers and gold; Southern Spain gave them silver, iron, tin and lead; and tin came, too, from the far-off Scilly Isles and Cornwall.

But these voyages were not enough for the fearless Phœnician mariners, and it is very probable that they sailed from a Red Sea port round Africa and back through the Straits of Gibraltar into the Mediterranean Sea. The story is told by Herodotus, and was doubted for a long time, but it is quite in character with their other deeds of daring, and there is no reason why it should not be true. Herodotus tells

us that the voyage took three years, and that sometimes their food supply gave out, so that they were forced to plough the land and sow seed, and wait until the grain came up before sailing further.

The Phœnicians did not only trade by sea, their caravans also went overland from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf, and from Phœnicia overland to Babylon, and across the mountains to Van in Armenia. These land routes gave them honey, oil, and balm from the land of Judah and Israel; precious stones, wine, white wool and linen from Syria; spices and sword-blades from Arabia; carpets, hangings and cloaks from Assyria and Babylon; mules and horses from Armenia; and in Asia they trafficked in slaves.

A Phœnician caravan must have been an imposing sight. It was really like a moving market, and had to be large in order to be safe from robbers. In modern times, goods may be sent from one country to another, without in any way affecting the places through which they pass, but a caravan has to halt from time to time for rest and refreshment, and such stopping-places make markets by the way. The Phœnician sailors who voyaged out into uncharted seas were not the only men of their nation who braved dangers; the first armed merchants who left Tyre to go overland to Babylon faced dangers just as great. They had to cross the deserts with no maps or knowledge of the route, they had to trust to native guides who often misled them, they had to pass through remote and inhospitable regions, and to run risks of attack from hostile tribes roaming over the

desert. After a time the journey had been made so often, that the route became known, many of the difficulties were removed and the caravan journey became easier, but only men of fearless determination to succeed could have accomplished what the first Phœnician merchants did.

The journey from Tyre lasted about three months, and when the traders arrived they generally pitched their tents outside the city walls, near water and trees. They could be seen by the watchmen on the towers, and no time would be lost in spreading the news that the caravan had arrived. Early in the morning the Phœnicians would be astir, arranging their goods so that they could be seen to the best advantage, and as soon as the city gates were opened, out would come the inhabitants, dressed as for a holiday, and very quickly bargaining would begin. The most important buyers were the great city merchants who had ordered goods in advance, and who now came to pay for and receive them.

Other caravans went to Armenia, and this road led through a rough mountain land, impossible for camels, and so the merchandise would be loaded on the backs of mules and asses as well as on those of men. It was a cold journey, and the Phœnicians wore fur and leather garments. They brought back over the same rough road large numbers of mules and horses in which the Armenian lands were rich.

All this trade and enterprise brought great wealth to Phœnicia, and spread the knowledge of the industries of the East over the whole of the then known world, but the Phœnicians themselves were not a

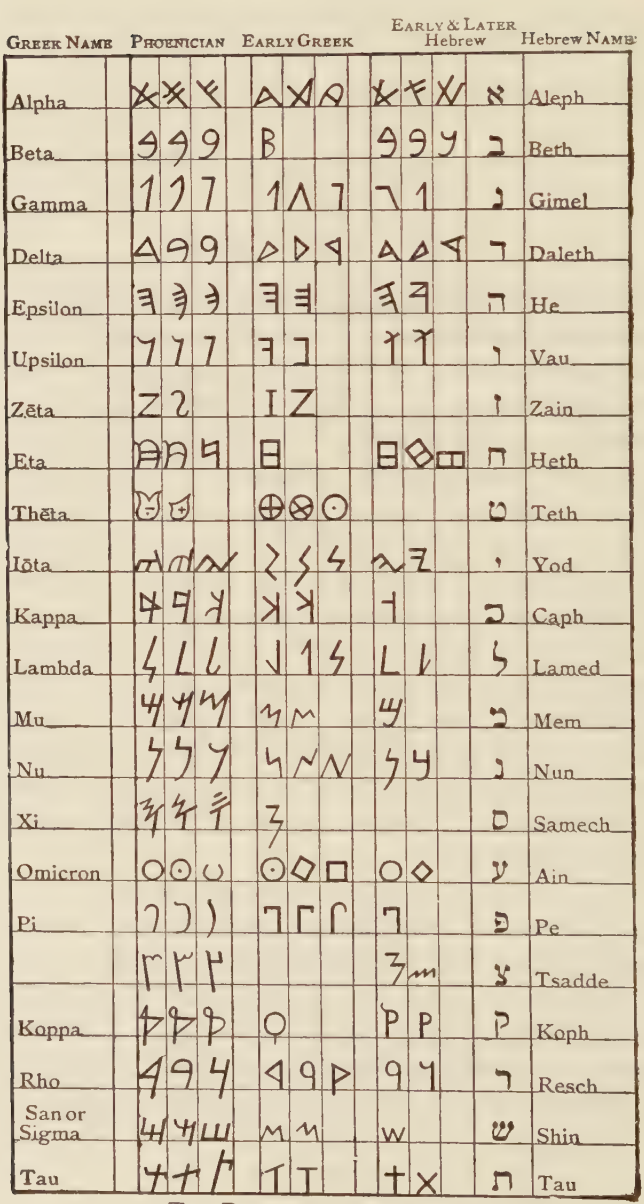
nation of high ideals and though they helped to spread civilization through the world, their intercourse had other consequences not so good. Wealth for themselves was their sole ambition, but they had no worthy aim for the employment of their wealth. In their determination to obtain everything a country could give them, they exhausted the fishing beds and mines, and drained the population of other lands in such a way that they destroyed rather than developed their resources. These methods hindered the development of other countries, for as long as their natural resources lasted, they served only to minister to the wealth of Phœnicia.

CHAPTER IV

Phœnician Colonies

As soon as Phœnician merchants had established trade in a place, they planted a colony there. These colonies soon became practically independent, only connected by the same loose ties which bound the Phœnician cities together. From Tyre and Sidon they went first to Egypt, where they established a station at Memphis, and then to the coasts of Asia Minor, whence they could easily reach the islands of the Ægean. They established colonies in the east and south of Cyprus, then they sailed on to Rhodes and the Ægean, though they withdrew when the Greeks came to these regions, as they preferred places where they had no rivals. So they passed to Sicily, and along the coast of North Africa (where Carthage became the greatest of all Phœnician colonies), and on to Spain, and then out into the Atlantic to the Cornish coast.

These Phœnician colonies formed three groups: those in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Ægean; those in the Central Mediterranean, North Africa and Sicily; and those in the Western Mediterranean, chiefly in Spain, and for nearly a thousand years Phœnician enterprise by sea and land, overcoming all difficulties, linked these distant places together.



THE PHOENICIAN ALPHABET

CHAPTER V

What We Owe to Phœnicia

The beginnings of the modern alphabet have been generally attributed to Phœnicia. The Egyptians and Babylonians had a very large number of symbols in their written languages, and though the Phœnicians did not invent the modern alphabet, they reduced the number and complication of the signs used, and introduced twenty-two much simpler ones. As the Phœnicians were the only nation who sailed North and South and East and West in the Mediterranean, and as their trading transactions required some kind of written form, their alphabet was naturally the one first introduced into Europe.

When the Greeks first saw these mysterious looking black marks written on paper, they were rather afraid of them, and thought they were some kind of magic that would bring them bad luck. But they soon not only grew accustomed to the Phœnician alphabet, but adapted it to their own use, improved on it, and handed it on to western Europe; and the letters we use today are descended from it.

Another debt we owe the Phœnicians, is the example they have given to all later nations who have carried civilization to the ends of the earth. Their

ships were the best of their time, it is true, yet they were only frail boats compared to the great vessels of today; they had no proper maps, or charts, or compass, but their daring, their fearlessness in the face of danger and their perseverance in overcoming difficulties have seldom been surpassed in later times and had never before been seen in their own.

But the Phœnicians left no history of their nation, what we have learned about them has come to us chiefly from other sources, they wrote no poetry, they made no original contributions to art or scientific knowledge, they do not even seem to have had the imagination which would have led explorers of different ideals to find out something of the lands they visited, they interpreted everything in terms of money. There has never been such a completely mercenary nation as Phœnicia. And so, though they were the carriers of a rich civilization from the East to Europe, they were themselves uncivilized, for true civilization consists in believing that there are things worth striving for that cannot be expressed in terms of money, and that the worth of a man's life is not measured by the abundance of the things he possesses.

CONCLUSION

THE first great chapter in the story of the way in which man has learned how to live had the river valleys in Egypt and Mesopotamia for its setting. These ancient civilizations gave their contribution to the world, and then, in course of time, their work done, they perished. But as from death springs life, so from the seed sown in the East came the flower. and the next great chapter in the story, when the mind of man was to win greater freedom in its search for truth, has the Ægean for its setting and begins with the Coming of the Greeks.

B.C.	Egyptians	Assyrians	Babylonians	Hebrews	Hittites	Persians	Phœnicians
4241	Calendar made First fixed date in History						
3400–2000	Menes Pyramid Age Khufu	Founding of Assur. First Empire in Western Asia founded	Sumerian Civilization Hammurapi	Hebrews enter Palestine under Abraham			
2000–1000	Period of the Empire Queen Hatshepsut. Thutmose III Tell-el-Amarna Letters Amenhotep IV (Ikhnaton) Ramses II			Joseph Moses; the Exodus Saul David	Boghaz-Keui, Capital Height of Old Hittite power Battle of Kadesh Treaty with Egypt Rise of Carchemish New Hittite power		Phœnicians appear as Colonizers
10th Century				Solomon: the Temple			Hiram, King of Tyre
9th Century				Elijah (Prophet)		Zoroaster (perhaps)	Carthage founded
8th Century		Founding of Assyrian Empire Sennacherib		Amos (Prophet) Isaiah (Prophet)	Fall of Carchemish		
7th Century		Assurbanipal Nineveh destroyed 606					Phœnicians probably sailed round Africa
6th Century	Egypt became a Persian province		Nebuchadnezzar Belshazzar & the Writing on the Wall Fall of Babylon 538	Captivity–586 Jeremiah (Prophet) Daniel Jews allowed to Return to Jerusalem		Cyrus founded Persian Empire	
5th Century						Xerxes, known to the Hebrews as Ahasuerus	

INDEX

A

Aaron, 123
Abraham, 118 ff., 159
Absalom, 135
Ægean civilization, 163
Ahab, 145, 197
Ahuramazda, 178
Alexander the Great, 153, 198
Alphabet, 210, 211
Amenhotep IV, 69 ff.
Amon, 32, 61
Amos, 146 ff.
Animals, sacred, 62; worship of, 60
Answerers, 65
Apis, 62
Ark, 126
Armenia, 207
Assurbanipal, 88, 167
Assyria, 83 ff.
Assyrian kings, 83, 85
Assyrian palaces, 85
Assyrian warfare, 84 ff.
Astronomy, 101

B

Baal, 197
Babel, tower of, 107
Babylon, city of, 76, 98 ff.; conquered by Cyrus, 188; Hanging Gardens of, 96; life in, 98 ff.
Babylonian dress, 100
Babylonian houses, 98 ff.
Babylonian industries, 101 ff.
Babylonian religion, 104 ff.
Babylonian schools, 99 ff.
Babylonian temples, 106 ff.
Babylonian writing, 90 ff.
Behistun Rock, 182
Belshazzar, 96
Bible, 115 ff.
Boghaz-keui, 163 ff., 169
Books, Assyrian, 81; Babylonian, 91; Egyptian, 34
Borsippa, 100
Bull, Sacred, 62
Bulls, Winged, 79

C

Cairo, 16
Calendar, Babylonian, 101; Egyptian, 21
Canaan, 118, 126
Canaanites, 127
Captivity, Hebrew, 96, 142, 151 ff.
Carchemish, 165, 173
Carthage, 209
Cataracts, 16
Chaldæans, 78, 96
Champollion, 36
Children, Egyptian, 52 ff.
Clocks, Babylonian, 102
Country life, Egyptian, 49 ff.
Creation Tablets, 81
Crœsus, 188
Cuneiform script, 90; decipherment of, 183
Cyrus, 96, 152, 185 ff.

D

Damascus, 140
Darius, 183, 190 ff.
Dead, Book of the, 65
Dead, Egyptian Judgment of the, 63 ff.
Delta, 14, 17, 42
Demotic, 35
Dress, Babylonian, 100; Egyptian, 37 ff.

E

Ea, 104
Ecbatana, 185
Egypt, land of, 13 ff.; shape, 14; climate, 17; upper and lower, 16; natural resources of, 22; earliest government of, 22; conquest of, by Persia, 190
Egyptian children, 52 ff.
Egyptian country life, 49 ff.
Egyptian dress, 37 ff.
Egyptian gardens, 40
Egyptian houses, 39 ff., 44
Egyptian ideas of the world, 23
Egyptian industries, 44 ff.
Egyptian mummies, 64
Egyptian pyramids, 26 ff.
Egyptian religion, 60 ff.
Egyptian schools, 52 ff.
Egyptian tombs, 24 ff.
Egyptian writing, 33 ff.
Elijah, 145 ff., 197
Esau, 119 ff., 168
Euphrates, 75
Excavations, in Asia Minor, 173; in Mesopotamia, 78 ff.
Exodus, 123 ff.

F

Fire-making, 6

G

Galley, Phœnician, 42, 203 ff.
Gods, Babylonian, 104 ff.; Egyptian, 60 ff., 172; Persian, 178; Phœnician, 197
Goliath, 131 ff.
Goshen, 121

H

Hammurapi, 93; code of laws, 94 ff.
Hanging Gardens, 96
Hathor, 62
Hatshepsut, 47, 58
Hebrew kingdom, 131 ff.; divided, 139 ff.
Hebrew patriarchs, 118 ff.
Hebrew prophets, 143 ff.
Heliopolis, 53, 69
Herod, 154
Herodotus, 63, 76, 141, 205
Hezekiah, 141
Hieratic, 35
Hieroglyphics, 34
Hittite treaty with Egypt, 169 ff.
Hittites, 58, 159 ff., 171
Horus, 68
Houses, Babylonian, 98 ff.; Egyptian, 39 ff., 44
Hymns, Babylonian, 106; Egyptian, 71

I

Ikhnaton, 69 ff.
Imhotep, the first architect, 29
Isaac, 118 ff.
Isaiah, 84, 147 ff.
Isis, 68
Israel, kingdom of, 139 ff.

J

Jacob, 119, 120, 159
Jeremiah, 149 ff.
Jericho, 128
Jerusalem, 134, 154
Jezebel, 197
Jonathan, 132
Jordan, 128
Joseph, 120 ff.
Joshua, 128
Judah, kingdom of, 141 ff.
Judges, 129

K

Kadesh, battle of, 169
Karnak, 31
Key of Life, 62
Khatti (see Hittites)
Khonsu, 172
Khufu, 27, 28

L

Layard, 80
Lebanon, 42, 195
Lydia, 167, 188

M

Maccabæus, Judas, 153 ff.
Marduk, 81, 104, 168
Memphis, 23, 43, 62, 209
Menes, 23
Mesopotamia, 75 ff.
Moloch, 197
Moon-God, Hymn to the, 106
Moses, 122 ff.
Mummy, 64
Murex, 199

N

Nebuchadnezzar, 96, 103, 142
Nile, 14 ff., 20, 71 ff.
Nile-God, 20
Nineveh, 87, 88, 109

O

Obelisks, 43, 53, 58
Osiris, 66 ff.

P

Palestine, 113 ff.
Papyrus, 33
Patriarchs, 118 ff.
Persepolis, 191
Persian buildings, 191
Persian education, 181
Persian religion, 177 ff.
Persians, 177 ff.
Pharaoh, 56 ff.
Phœnicia, 136, 195 ff.
Phœnician alphabet, 210 ff.
Phœnician caravans, 206 ff.
Phœnician characteristics, 196
Phœnician colonies, 209
Phœnician government, 198
Phœnician industries, 199 ff.
Phœnician religion, 197
Phœnician ships, 203 ff.
Phœnician trade, 200 ff.
Phœnician voyages, 204 ff.
Pre-historic times, 3 ff.
Prophets, 143 ff.
Psalter, 153
Punt, expedition to, 47 ff.
Purple dye, 199
Pylon, 30
Pyramids, 26 ff., 43

R

Rachel, 120
Ramses II, 58, 122, 168
Rawlinson, Henry, 182
Rebekah, 119
Red Sea, 14, 123
Rehoboam, 139 ff.
Rosetta Stone, 36
Royal Road, 190

S

Sahara, 14
Samaria, 140
Samuel, 130
Sardis, 188, 190
Satraps, 191
Saul, 130 ff.
Scarabs, 62
Schools, Babylonian, 99 ff.
Egyptian, 52 ff.
Sennacherib, 141
Sheba, Queen of, 137
Shiloh, 134
Sidon, 199
Sinai, 125
Solomon, 135, 136 ff.
Speke, J. H., 20
Sphinx, 29
Stone Age, 5 ff.
Sumerians, 78, 93
Sun-disk, 61
Sun-God, 20, 32, 61, 126
Sun-God, Hymn to the, 71
Susa, 190
Swiss Lake dwellings, 7
Symbols of gods, 61 ff.

T

Tell-el-Amarna, 70
Temples, Babylonian, 106; Egyptian, 29 ff.; Solomon's 137, 152
Thebes, 31, 42 ff., 61
Thebes, temple at, 61
Thoth, 61
Thutmose III, 58, 69
Ten Commandments, 125
Tigris, 75

Titus, 154
Tombs, 24 ff.
Toys, Egyptian, 52
Troy, 173
Tyre, 42, 199

U

Ushabti, 65

V

Victoria Nyanza, 14

W

Wilderness, Hebrews in the, 124, 125 ff
Writing, Assyrian and Egyptian compared, 90 ff.; cuneiform, 90; Egyptian, 33 ff.

X

Xenophon, 203
Xerxes, 191, 192

Z

Zend-Avesta, 177
Ziggurat, 106
Zodiac, 101
Zoroaster, 177 ff.

SUGGESTIONS ABOUT BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY

This book has been intended for those who were reading about these ancient civilizations for the first time. The following list is for those older readers who would like to know of books for further study. It only contains suggestions as to how to begin, and is in no way meant to be a full bibliography.

H. F. OSBORN: *Men of the Old Stone Age.*

W. J. SOLLAS: *Ancient Hunters.*

J. H. BREASTED: *History of Egypt.*

SIR E. A. WALLIS BUDGE: *Dwellers on the Nile.*
Literature of the Ancient Egyptians.

ROSTOVTZEFF: *History of the Ancient World, Volume I. The Orient and Greece.*

JAMES BAIKIE: *Lands and Peoples of the Bible.*
Wonder Tales of the Egyptians.

H. R. HALL: *Ancient History of the Near East.*

R. W. ROGERS: *History of Babylonia and Assyria.*
History of Persia.

C. LEONARD WOOLLEY: *The Sumerians.*
Ur of the Chaldees.

C. F. KENT: *The Historical Bible. Heroes and Crises of Early Hebrew History.*
Founders and Rulers of United Israel.
Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah.
Makers and Teachers of Judaism.

G. A. SMITH: *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land.*

A. BERTHOLET: *History of Hebrew Civilization.*

RAWLINSON: *Phœnicia.*

STATUE OF TUTANKHAMON IN THE FORM OF THE GOD KHONSU, NOW IN THE CAIRO MUSEUM.

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum.

PRE-HISTORIC MAN MAKING FLINT IMPLEMENT.

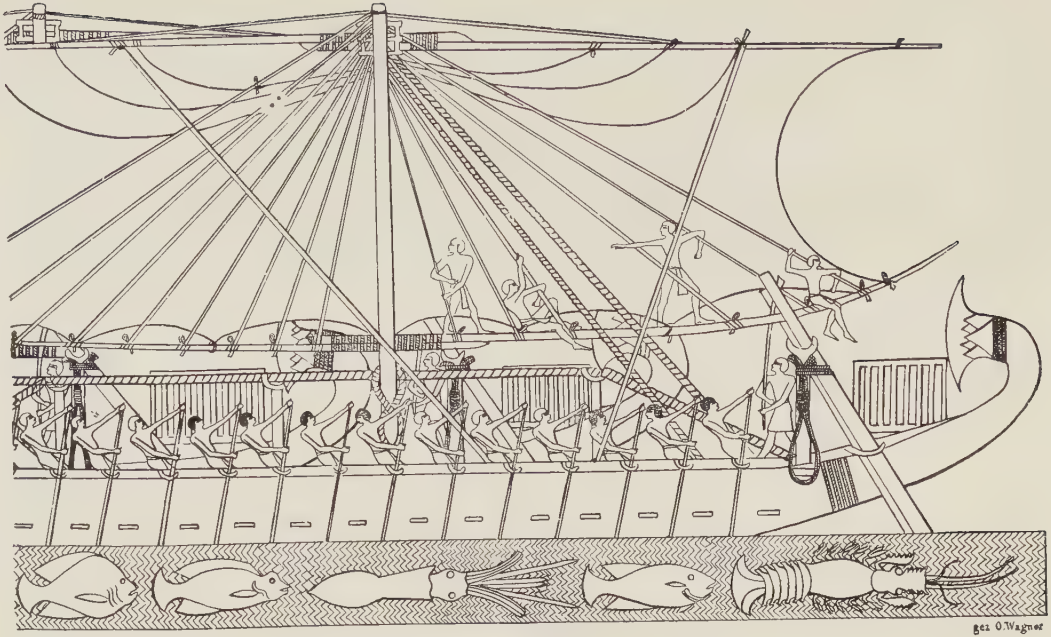
PRE-HISTORIC CAVE-DWELLERS.

SEATED STATUE OF KHAFRA, BUILDER OF THE SECOND PYRAMID.
PERIOD OF THE OLD KINGDOM.

Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

WALL PAINTING FROM THE TOMB OF NAKHT AT THEBES SHOWING VINTAGE AND FOWLING SCENES. PERIOD OF THE EMPIRE.

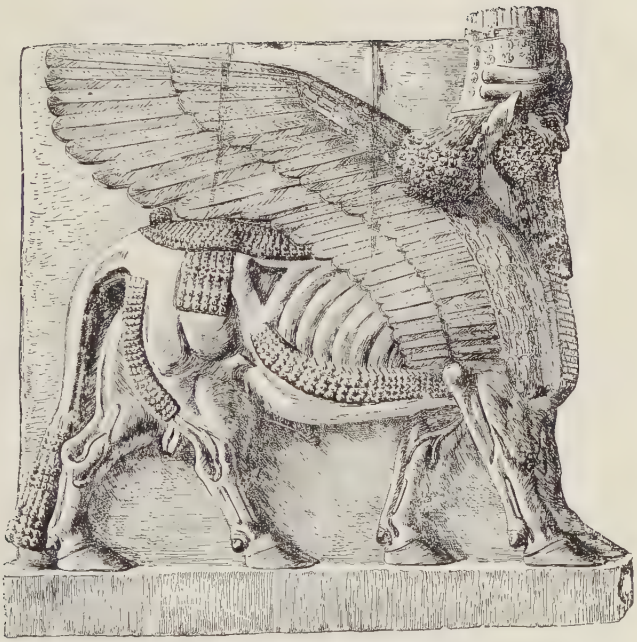
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



EGYPTIAN SHIP IN THE TIME OF HATSHEPSUT.

MODEL OF A TRAVELLING BOAT FROM THE TOMB OF MEHENKWETRE, *ca.* 2000 B. C., IN THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK.

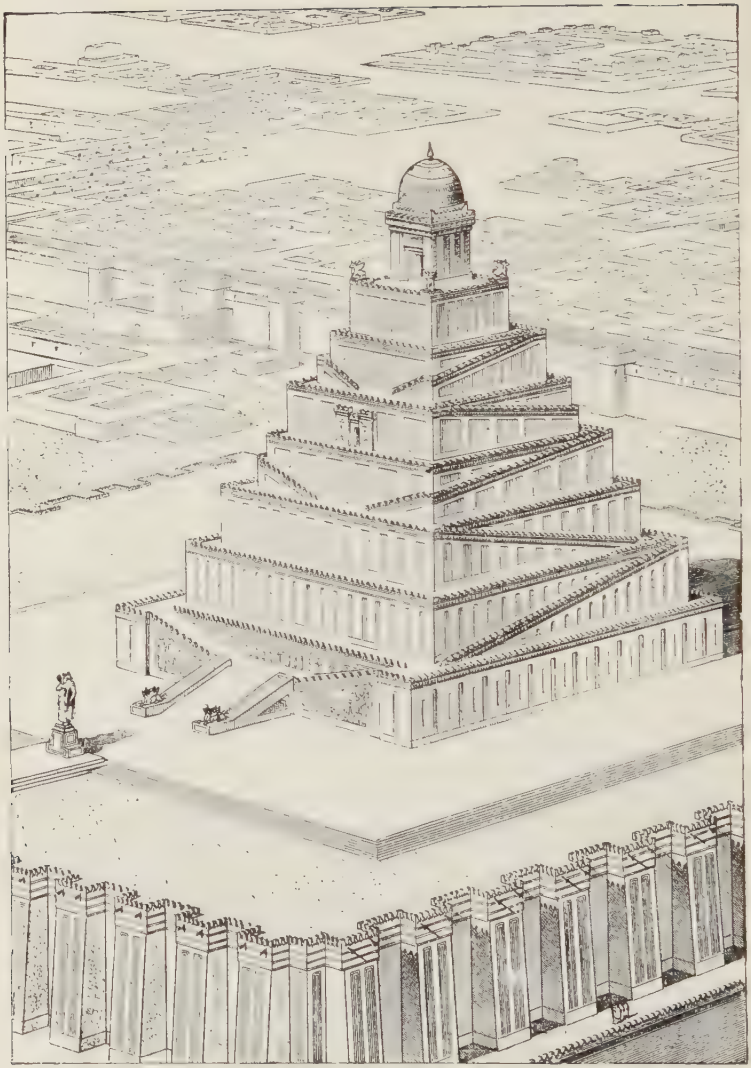
Courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum.



WINGED BULL.

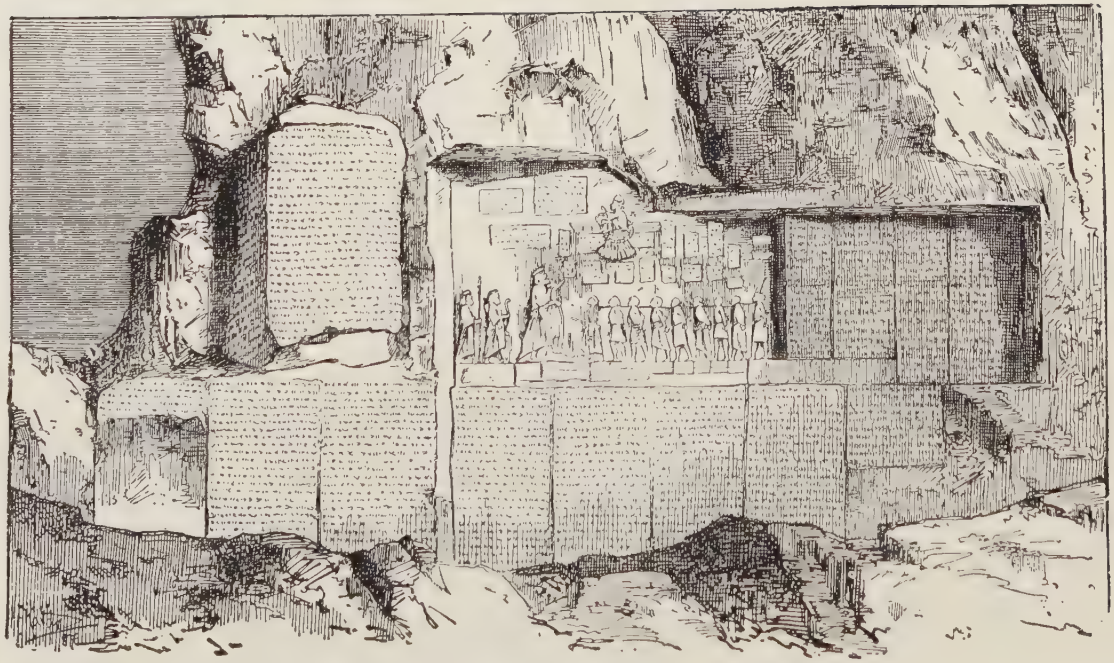
THE INTERIOR OF SARGON'S PALACE.

ASSURBANIPAL HUNTING LIONS



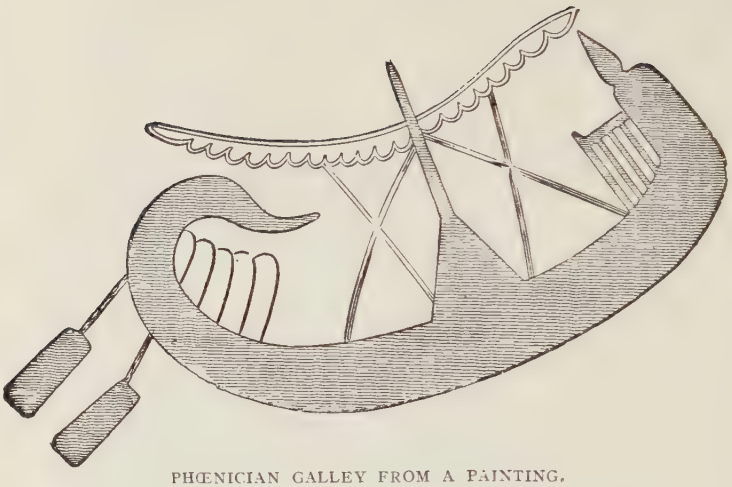
"ZIGGURAT" RESTORED.

HITTITE ROCK-SCULPTURE AT IBRIZ IN CILICIA, REPRESENTING A HITTITE GOD.

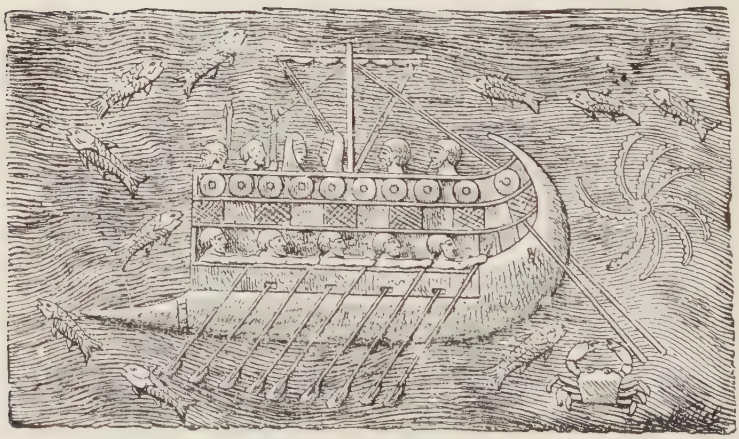


SCULPTURES AND INSCRIPTIONS ON THE ROCK OF BEHISTÛN.

ARCHER-FRIEZE,—IN GLAZED TILES ALONG THE PALACE OF DARIUS I. AT SUSA.



PHŒNICIAN GALLEY FROM A PAINTING.



PHŒNICIAN BIREME.

D
65
M5
CAMROSE LUTHERAN COLLEGE
LIBRARY

Date Due

BJJJ

PRINTED IN U.S.A. CAT. NO. 24 161 BRODART

D
65
M5

3892

D
65
M5

3892

CAMROSE LUTHERAN COLLEGE
LIBRARY

CAMROSE LUTHERAN COLLEGE

AUGUSTANA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
1 1910 000105715